PEARLS OF WISDOM

By

His Holiness SWAMI KESAVAIAHJI

FOREWORD

BY The Hon'ble Justice Shri T. RAMAPRASADA RAO

SRI SAI BABA BHAKTHA SAMAJAM (Regd.)

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FOREWORD

BY

THE HON'BLE JUSTICE SHRI T.RAMAPRASADA RAO

I have the honour and the unique privilege of writing a FOREWORD to this book containing beads woven into a garland of spiritual and divine enlightenment. The sanctum sanctorum of Sri Shirdi Sai Baba Mandir at Shenoy Nagar adores Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi. His choicest apostle, His Holiness Swami Kesavaiahji, is no doubt physically absent from our midst, but is spiritually omnipresent in the Sai Mandir. The magnificent prayer hall humming with resplendent devotion to God and Guru, the cadenced ecstasy with which the Pranams of the Bhaktas were offered through Guru Kesavaiahji and to the Guru himself are green in our memory. The Swamiji wanted everyone to be disciplined

in his devotion. By practice and precept Swami Kesavaiahji followed the commandments of Hindu tradition in understanding true Bhakti as " when all energies of man including those of the organs of knowledge and action, get concentrated as a unified mental mood directed to the supreme, spontaneous like an instinct and devoid of any extraneous motives, the resulting state of mind is called Bhakti." Swami Kesavaiahji did not involve himself in the observance of elaborate rituals or parrot - like uttering of mystic mantras, for he believed in dedication through the normal Bhakti process. He was always keen that, at a certain stage, mind should reject worldliness and get God-intoxicated. He always preached lessons so as to create a new type of mind in the personality of man.

The articles which are published in this sacred book give out practical examples as to how a man, though living in *Samsara,* could yet become an institution from which he could radiate rays of eternal light so as to make the people around him God-conscious. Swami Kesavaiahji deprecated the practice of being lured by those who exhibit occult powers, but He always insisted in his articles that infinite faith in the Guru will ultimately give satisfaction and bliss to those who respect tradition and religion. He always believed in Nama Bhajan and Sankeerthana, and in all congregations, he used to feel himself as one amongst his devotees. According to him *Sravana* is the easiest for any devotee who has an ear for fine Bhajan on the glories of the Lord. His extensive quotations in this book from ancient texts are a ready example as to how learned he was. His watchword was that truth will triumph and Dharma will reign supreme in the world of today and tomorrow when matter and spirit work in harmony and perfect union. He beautifully summarised the object of Guru Poornima, which day is dedicated to the worship of Vyasa, the author of the Vedas and who has been described as Vishnuroopaya. He brings out Shirdi Sai Baba's eminence by quoting practical illustrations of the greatness of his own Guru. He would take enlightenment from the Gita, the Koran and the Bible, and highlight the importance of prayer as solicitation to God in a humble and reverential way.

The Swamiji believed in sublimating the self in Man by smearing the sacred ash on the forehead of his devotees, with a distinct pressure of his thumb.

He had by practice and precept instilled in our minds that the sacred ash symbolises " the Gnana which remains after all Karma is burnt out" and accelerates the consciousness in us to realise ourselves and the unreality of everything around us.

The above are some of my thoughts when I read through the beads of divine inspiration spun into a garland by Swami Kesavaiahji. Once his preachings and dissertations come out in book form, I am sure that this would be a Book of Knowledge to be preserved in the library of everyone who has respect for Guru, religion, truth and prayer.

Mr. S. S. Subramaniam, son of Sri Swami Kesavaiahji, is at present in his Grihasthasrama inspite of his vocation and avocation. He is rightly taking interest in the institutions set up by the Swamiji and publishing this book with the help and association of co-devotees and admirers like Dr. H. T. Vira Reddy, Mr. M. Uttam Reddy, Mrs. Chandravalli and other respected disciples.

I wish the venture success.

Om Shanti.

PREFACE

"PEARLS OF WISDOM " is the title chosen to the collection of writings, speeches and messages of His Holiness Swami Kesavaiahji dealing with his Guru, Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi, spanning a period of four decades of the Swamiji's spiritual ministry of Sainath.

A Government official most of his life, the Swamiji was blessed by Sainath and remained devoted to Sai and to popularise His teachings. How well he succeeded is a matter of popular knowledge. By the time the Swamiji attained Samadhi full of years and glory, he was acclaimed as a great devotee and chosen apostle of Sri Sai Baba.

Naturally enough, he was frequently invited to contribute articles and papers on the life and teachings of Sri Sai Baba. He wrote them not only with authoritative knowledge of the facts but also with enthusiastic devotion. He could convey this devotion by word of mouth when he was in flesh and blood. Today his papers, this book, speak for him. In these pages we hear the voice of the

Swamiji. What does he say ? In simple words, he advocates surrender to God. Man will always find help and relief if he places his burden on Him. The rest will follow as He dictates.

As soon as Sri Sai Baba had established Himself at Shirdi, He set Himself to work for the good, for the salvation of mankind. He recognized no divisions in mankind, not on the basis of birth, not on that of religion. In this respect a true national integrator, He strove for the good of all, impartially. As I tasted the ambrosia of the Swamiji's wisdom, I felt thrilled at the unique modernity and patriotic relevance of Sainath's message when the Swamiji's says: " Sri Sai Baba during His lifetime annually celebrated with great eclat the Sri Rama Navami festival to impress on His devotees the importance of such a celebration. This day was sacred to all His devotees who turned up in large numbers to participate in Sri Rama Navami festival. In these celebrations, Hindus and Muslims participated in harmony. Sri Sai Baba probably had an end in view to bring about the unification of the two communities and ensure the maintenance of peace in our land. How important and valuable the realization of such an objective is proved by later events in our country! Sri Sai Baba had an unerring instinct for what is good for our people and country.

Sri Sai Baba was a mystic of the first order. He could perform "miracles" but He did not often wish to. He did not believe in breaking the rhythm of nature. He taught man to have confidence in himself so that he could surrender himself to the Godhead. ' If a person places his burden on Me and trusts Me in full faith, I bear his burden and protect him.' Devotion is all. How clearly, how convincingly, does Swami Kesavaiahji explain this credo! Here, in these pages, He is as a father guiding His little child in a fascinating, new country. He makes religion delightful to practise, easy to follow.

Mr. Justice T. Ramaprasada Rao, Retired Chief Justice of High Court of Tamil Nadu who is emerging as an authentic' interpreter of the spiritual mores of South India, has described in his masterly *Foreword, '* Pearls of Wisdom ' as beads of divine inspiration spun into a garland of spiritual and divine

enlightenment by Swami Kesavaiahji. The quality of the Swamiji's exposition of "*Sai-ism*" flowed from the sublime truth that ' He would take enlightenment from the Gita, the Koran and the Bible and highlight the importance of Prayer as solicitation to God in a humble and reverential way.'

At the end of fifty years of wandering in journalism, publishing and public affairs with Rajaji as my mentor and Mr. Khasa Subba Rau as my professional guide to whom I dutifully surrendered my journalistic efforts extending over a period of three decades in promoting *Swatantra* and *Swarajya* English Weeklies, I am inspired by Swami Kesavaiahji to consider " Pearls of Wisdom " as His Sai Gita for posterity. I accept the call. ,

With the Chairmanship of the Samajam in the sturdy hands of Mr. M. Uttam Reddy, a distinguished lawyer and a man of rare erudition, with insight into our culture and a commitment to serve the mission of Sai and the Swamiji, I pray that Pearls of Wisdom will be followed by books planned to awaken, widen and intensify the national interest in the universal spiritual prophet of the twentieth century, Sainath of Shirdi.

No compartmentalization is attempted considering the nervous refinement with which the Swamiji presented the pearls of his integrated wisdom. In this effort, I derived considerable help from the versatility of the veteran journalist, Mr. N. S. Ramaswami.

As editor, I am aware of the contribution made by Sri Sai Leela, Sai Sudha, Bulletin of Sri Sai Samaj (Calcutta), Sai Bliss, Sapthagiri, Sunday Times, Deccan Chronicle, Deccan Herald, Indian Republic, Daily News, Free India, and All India Radio in publicising the Swamiji's writings and activities over three decades. I express my gratitude to the media for providing the base for the emergence of "Pearls Of Wisdom."

I express my gratitude to the divine presence of Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi and His Holiness Swami Kesavaiahji—the Sage of Shenoy Nagar, during my *sadhana* of 120 days experiencing the birth-pangs of production of " Pearls ", receiving the co-operation of Print Graphics, a press with a difference and

presenting to Sri Sai Baba Bhaktha Samajam the Swamiji's Sai Gita, " PEARLS OF WISDOM."

—VUPPULURI KALIDAS.

Kingdom Of Heaven
Sankirtan Of The *Lord*
Nine Ways Of Salvation
Divine Music
How To Overcome Maya
" Fallen From Status "
Worship Of Truth
Mukti By Meditation
The Ultimate Reality
God Realization
Spiritual Life
Purpose Of Religion
Bane of Worldliness
Mind And Its Mischief
Essence Of Gita
Gandhi, The Mahatma
Glories Of Pandaripur
Buddha's Teachings
Hope and Peace
Message Of The Ramayana
Realising God
Ending Social Evils
Spiritual Maxims
Paths to Immortality
Lights On Life Divine
Hope, Your Guardian Genius
Look up, Climb, Be Happy

His Holiness Swami Kesavaiahji (Brief Sketch)

Pearls Of Wisdom

THUS SPAKE SRI SAI BABA OF SHIRDI : If a person surrenders himself completely to Me and always remembers Me, his ego is destroyed and the Avidya, nescience, will vanish. He is freed from all worldly taints and maladies in an instant and is assured everlasting joy (bliss).

The mere utterance of My name as ' Sai Sai ' in good faith will remove sins of speech and also those of hearing.

If My stories are listened to with rapt attention and intense faith, one is cured of all diseases of mind and body.

Whatever you do, wherever you are, I am quite aware of everything you do. Bear this in mind always. I will be with you the instant you think of Me and need My help. Fear not.

If a person places his burden on Me and trusts Me in full faith, I bear his burden and protect him.

If a person considers Me his sole refuge withdrawing his mind from all worldly objects and pleasures, he gains Paramartha. He need not fear anything for body or soul. In the abode of My devotees there will be no dearth of food or clothing.

If a person trusts Me and leaves everything to Me, I will never let him fall. I will give My head to save him. I am Bhakta Paradheena—the bonded slave of My devotees.

Why do you fear when I am everywhere? I have to think of My devotees. If a devotee is about to fall, lam bound to protect him. At every step, I have to take care of you. Else, what will happen to you ! God knows.

Trust in the Guru fully and wholeheartedly. Leave off all doubts. That is the only Sadhana. Guru is God. Guru is everything. He is your mother, father, well wisher, relative and true friend. Seeing all as Guru is the highest state and he who feels Him in every creature verily becomes Myself.

All the maladies arise because man does not shed, his ego, feels that his body is everything. It is ego that creates this world with all its transient joys and

sorrows. The world is only a combination of different objects perceived by the sense organs. It is the kaleidoscopic effect of one's own mind and cravings of the senses. By self-introspection, one realises the truth about the all-pervading, secondless and Absolute Self and in that realisation the ego is destroyed, the world vanishes and indescribable eternal Bliss and Peace , Suddha Chaitanya, follows. In truth, this is the natural state of the " Self." All other states created by the mind and the senses are illusory and delude the real nature of the " Self." There is no such thing as realising the " Self." What a Guru does is only removal of the veil of ignorance that regards the ego with all its myriad appearances and feelings created by the mind and the senses as the real self. This done, what remains is the Self Absolute, Real and Eternal. It is the Self that existed, that exists and will exist for ever. The Self has no beginning and no end. The Self is formless and is not limited by shape, time or space.

Mind, body and the world have no existence of their own devoid of the "Self." They are like shadows. When there is self-awareness which is pure consciousness, Suddha Chaitanya, all the hallucinations caused by Avidya , ignorance, with the help of the mind, body and the senses on the imaginary screen called the world vanish automatically. The Self is beyond knowledge and ignorance. Knowledge is only a means and not an end by itself-To get over this illusion which is ever perplexing and bewildering, and to cross the miserable and all consuming whirlpool of existence, Samsara, one should get hold of a Guru as a person struggling for life and lost in an unfathomable rough sea catches a raft. Though wave after wave of temptation and delusion may try to upset him, every moment he should steadfastly stick to his Guru as the drowning man hugs the raft without losing his hold on it to save himself. Have firm belief in the Guru.

As long as a mirror is covered with dust and dirt, so long it cannot reflect the Sun. Once the dust and dirt is scrubbed away, the Sun shines forth. Similarly with our mind. As long as it is filled with evil thoughts and insatiable desires, so long it cannot reflect the self within. Once we cleanse our mind of all these ills and keep it pure, calm and serene, wisdom, Gnana, shines forth, exhibiting the real self. He who sees Me in every living creature and with pity feeds every

creature, really feeds Me. There is none dearer to Me than he. You should not harm any creature. You should not be harsh to the poor and the forlorn. You should never despise those maimed and suffering from loathsome diseases. See Me in all these. If you do, you have no fear of births and deaths.

Those who are fortunate and whose sins are at an end seek Me and worship Me. No need for any big show or paraphernalia. Let My name —Sai, Sai—be uttered in wholehearted devotion and with a melting heart one-pointed. Your difficulties will vanish in an instant and I shall redeem you from all sins. Believe this.

Anything, however small that is offered to Me with full love and devotion, that I readily accept. Even if the world is offered to Me with pride and sense of ego, that I immediately reject. What I accept is love and not the object offered. Note that I do not accept from all. I have to give back a hundred times more than what I receive.

To attain the highest end, —goal— Dhyana is very important. By deep meditation the Vrittjs—thoughts—are calmed and made one-pointed. Quite desireless and with firm determination, you should meditate on the Lord who is in all creatures. If you cannot meditate on the formless, meditate keeping the Guru before your mind. The mother tortoise by mere glance feeds her young ones. The Guru's glance is nectar supreme for your sustenance, happiness, peace, redemption from Samsara, and everlasting bliss. May you taste this ambrosia sweet and divine waiting for you !

Give water to the thirsty, food to the hungry and clothes to the naked and whatever help you can offer to the sick and the desolate. Never bark like a dog whenever any person approaches you for help. Treat him courteously and with love. See Hari in him. " Allah Malik " i.e. God is our sole refuge. The Divine plan is mysterious, inscrutable and marvellous. Submit to His will. His will be done and if we seek Him in every creature surely He will bless us.

This Dwaraka Mayi (the mosque in Shirdi where Baba lived) is your Mother. Once you enter and sit on Her lap all your anxieties and worries cease and dangers are warded off.

This Mother is all-merciful and extremely kind to her children. That fortunate child who takes delight in resting on Her lap attains bliss.

You should give up the bad habit of eating alone without offering it to others. You should remember the Lord and offer things to Him first before partaking of anything. He who satisfies his senses without offering the object to the Source is asinner.

I am not the five feet body you have been seeing. Though My body may vanish, My bones in the Tomb will ever remain active. Not only Myself but also my Tomb will talk and give solace, hope and cheer to those who seek Me as their sole refuge. This I speak in truth. Believe Me ! I am always with you, though I may not be in the physical body. Grieve not.

I want only two things, Nishta (intense faith) and Saburi (patience). Hari (The Lord) will protect him who has faith and patience.

Oh Shama! take this book—Vishnu Sahasranama—I present it to you. When I suffered intensely once I kept this book close to My heart and I cannot describe how it relieved Me of My pain and suffering. It is a wonderful medicine for all our afflictions and ailments and is very efficacious. So read this with devotion and love, and it will do you good.

What is the use of merely reading sacred works without shedding ‘I’ ness and 'My' ness and without keeping the mind pure and spotless and passions under complete check ? A true devotee should have no Mamata—attachment—but should have Samata —equal vision—towards all beings.

I would never be untrue to My promises. My word and even sacrifice My life to keep it.

Surrender does not mean mere prostration and service to the Guru. It means complete surrender of everything, including the body and mind, with the conviction that the body belongs to the Guru and exists merely to serve Him. Such total surrender, Saranagati, completely devoid of the' ego seme—and overflowing with sincere love and devotion, quickly leads one to attain Brahma Gnana, the key to Kaivalya, Immortality and Bliss. By the Guru's grace, the Timira, ignorance, in the spiritual eye of the devotee is removed and he

perceives Divine Light. The Sadguru is Nirguna, Sat, Chit, Ananda in reality. The disciple in essence is of the same nature. But owing to Avidya, ignorance, the disciple is deluded birth after birth. When the Guru's grace at last descends on him, the dark clouds melt away into nothingness and the Radiant Sun, Suddha Chaitanya, shines forth in all its glory and pristine purity. The paths of Gnana and Bhakti lead to the same goal.

Gnana Marga is Ram Phal. Bhakti Marga is Sita Phal. The pulp of the Sita Phal is almost on the surface and can be assimilated quickly, whereas the pulp of Ram Phal is deeper within and is hard to get at.

He who indulges in criticism and slander really injures Me, but he who bears all this with patience and fortitude is extremely dear to Me. If you want My blessing, never injure others even in thought.

There is no need to go far to find Me. I am always in you. Forget your name and form. What remains ? That supreme consciousness is Myself. You see Me in yourself and in all beings. He who loves Me thus and meditates on Me surely comes to Me. This is the truth supreme. In fact, he is really Myself. The whole world without Me is a desert to him who always loves Me. So for your own benefit, leave off Ahamkara and Mamakara, which is the root cause of Ranga and Dwesha see Me who am seated in your heart and in the heart of every being. Blessed be thou !

It is my special characteristic to free any person who surrenders himself completely to Me, who worships Me faithfully and who remembers Me and meditates on Me constantly. I shall draw out My devotees from the jaws of death. If My stories are listened to, all the diseases will be got rid of. So, hear My stories with respect and think and meditate on them, assimilate them. This is the way of happiness and contentment.

If I take one rupee as Dakshina from anybody, I have to return it ten-fold to him. I never take anything gratis. I never ask anyone indiscriminately. I only ask and take from him whom the Fakir (my Guru) points out. If any one is indebted formerly to the Fakir, money is received from him. The donor gives, i.e., sows his seeds, only to reap a rich harvest in future.

Wealth should be the means to work out Dharma. If it is used for personal enjoyment, it is wasted. Unless you have given it before, you do not get now. So the best way to receive is to give. The giving of Dakshina advances Vairagya — non-attachment and thereby Bhakti and Gnana. Give one and receive ten-fold.

He who loves Me most always sees Me. The whole world is desolate to him without Me, he tells no stories but Mine. He ceaselessly meditates upon Me and always chants My name. I feel indebted to him who surrenders himself completely to Me and ever remembers Me. I shall repay his debt by giving him salvation, self-realisation. I am dependent on him who thinks and hungers after Me and who does not eat anything without first offering it to Me. He who thus comes to Me thinks as one with Me, just as the river gets to the sea and becomes merged with it. So leaving out pride and egoism and with no trace of them, you should surrender yourself to Me who am seated in your heart.

If a man utters My name with love, I shall fulfil all his wishes, increase his devotion. It is My special characteristic to free any person who surrenders himself completely to Me and who worships Me faithfully and who remembers Me and meditates on Me constantly. The simple remembrance of My name as Sai, Sai will do away with sins of speech and hearing.

I pledge that I would cross even the seven seas to help those who seek My protection. God runs to help devotees in times of danger.

One has to reap what one sows, and there is no escape unless one suffers and squares up one's old debts and dealings with others. Greed for money drags the greedy man to the lowest level and ultimately brings destruction on him and others.

First give bread to the hungry and then eat yourself. I am roaming in their forms. He who sees Me in all is My beloved.

I have to suffer for My devotees, their difficulties are Mine.

To get self-realization, Dhyana is necessary. Quite desireless, you should meditate on the Lord who is present in all the creatures, and when the mind is thus concentrated and made singularly devoted the goal will be easily reached.

Look at Me wholeheartedly, and I in turn look at you sincerely. He who loves Me most always sees Me. I am dependent on him who thinks and hungers after Me and who does not eat anything without first offering it to Me. I feel indebted to him who surrenders himself completely to Me and ever remembers Me. I shall repay his debt by giving him salvation, self-realisation.

Sai knows fully the desires of His devotees and fulfils them. They get what they want and are grateful. So we invoke Him and prostrate ourselves before Him. Forgetting all our faults, let Him free us from all anxieties. He who, being overcome with all calamities, remembers and prays to Sai thus, will get his mind calmed and purified through His grace.

This ocean of mundane existence is very hard to cross. Waves of infatuation beat high there against the bank of bad thoughts and break down the trees of fortitude. The breeze of egoism blows forcibly and makes the ocean rough and agitated. Crocodiles in the form of anger and hatred move there fearlessly. Eddies in the form of the idea " I and mine " and other doubts whirl there incessantly and innumerable fish in the form of censure, hate and jealousy play there. Though this ocean is so fierce and terrible, Sadguru Sai is its Agasti, destroyer, and the devotees of Sai have not the least fear of it. Our Sadguru is the boat which will safely take us across the ocean.

Hearing the stories of saints is not so difficult as the other Sadhanas. The stories remove all fear of this Samsara and take you on to the spiritual path. So listen to these stories, meditate on them and assimilate them. If this is done, you will become pure and holy. You may attend to your worldly duties, but give your mind to Sai and His stories and then He is sure to bless you. Hearing the stories of the saints is, in a way, keeping their company. The importance of the company of the saints is very great. If you take refuge in the saints wholeheartedly, they will carry you safely across the ocean of worldly existence. It is for this reason that the saints manifest themselves in this world.

Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi is not finite or limited. He dwells even today in all beings. He pervades all and everything. He was well versed in the knowledge of the Vedas, as well as in the science of self-realisation. He came into this world

for a specific purpose. He often said : " Let His man (devotee) be at any distance, a thousand koss away from Hjm, he will be drawn to Shirdi like a sparrow with a thread tied to its feet." His assurance is : Where ever you are, whenever you call me, I shall be with you instantly, whenever you need me, fear not. You shall be protected. Though the devotee loses sight of Sai, Sai never loses sight of him. Sai is ever present in everyone of His devotees watching over him and follows him everywhere."

The best course is to surrender our body, speech and mind to the Guru's feet and always chant His name for destroying our sins. This is called complete surrender to the Guru. The only sure sign of this is that our mind gets calm and peaceful. The greatness of this surrender, devotion and knowledge will come in its train. This is axiomatic truth.

Realising The Divine

Knowing Him who is the origin and dissolution of the universe, the source of all virtues, the destroyer of all sins, the master of all good qualities, the immortal and the abode of universe, as seated in one's own self, He is perceived as different from, and transcending, the tree of Samsara as time and form.

May we realise Him—the transcendent and adorable Master of the universe—who is the Supreme Lord over all the lords, the Supreme God above all the Gods, and the Supreme Ruler over all the Rulers.

He has nothing to achieve for Himself, nor has He any organ of action. No one is equal or superior to Him. His great power alone is described in the Vedas to be of various kinds, and His knowledge and strength and action are described as inherent in Him.

No one in the world is His master, nor has anybody any control over Him. There is no sign by which He can be inferred. He is the cause of all and the ruler of individual souls. He has no parent, nor is there any one who is His Lord.

Saviour Of The First Order

WHENEVER virtue and truth subside and vice, tyranny and untruth prevail, some great souls appear in this world, true to the words of Lord Sri Krishna in the 'Gita' to protect the virtuous, destroy the evil-doers and uphold righteousness.

Our country, Bharath, is well known for such divine persons who are verily Avatara Purushas, Godmen on earth. Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi is the most recent in our memory in the hierarchy of such great saints.

One remarkable feature about Sri Sai Baba, which has made a powerful spiritual appeal to all who came under His spell, is that His life on the physical plane is shrouded in mystery and that very little is known about his early life. By the time Baba arrived at Shirdi, He had developed a unique personality, great spirituality, wonderful healing powers and prophetic vision. His residence was first under the shade of a neem tree wherefrom He moved to a small, old, dilapidated Masjid, which He named " Dwaraka Mayi", where He continued till He attained Mahasamadhi.

Till about 1908, His devotees were confined to Shirdi, and thereafter His greatness came to be known in Bombay and other places. One of the best devotees, Nanasaheb Chandorkar, came under His influence in 1892 and after Him came or rather was/jf brought Das Ganu Maharaj. Both these devotees spread the ' fame of Baba far and wide. Enormous crowds rushed to Shirdi for getting darshan of Baba. To obtain His Grace, presents of money, food and clothes made to Baba by several devotees were passed on by the All-merciful Sai to the poor and the sick and those in need of help. His charity was bountiful.

Sai Baba was a repository of goodness, kindness and love to one and all. He was unostentatious and accessible to everyone. He Himself begged His food daily and was clad in a shabby long robe. He was a " Trikala Gnani ", possessing knowledge of the past, the present and the future. The devotees were charged with spiritual fervour in His holy presence and were cleansed of all their sins past and present by His mere glance. Sri Sai Baba had no love for the perishable things of the world and was always engrossed in self-realisation. His heart was pure, crystal clear and His speech always poured nectar. The rich and the poor were the same to Him and He cared neither for praise nor for abuse.

Baba never practised the ' Ashta Siddhis,' though He had reached a higher stage. He used to light the lamps in the Masjid with the oil supplied gratis

by the banias of the village. At one time these banias refused to supply oil to Baba. Quite unperturbed, Baba kept the dry wicks in the lamps and filled them with consecrated water instead of oil. When the lamps were lighted, they began to burn and kept burning the whole night. This put down the pride of the bania's' who repented and apologised to Baba for. their thoughtless act.

Baba performed many other *chamatkars.* On one occasion there was a terrible storm at Shirdi: the winds began to blow fiercely, the clouds roared and rain began to descend in torrents. When people in fear prayed to Baba, he came out and standing at the edge of the Masjid addressed the storm in a thunderous voice, " Stop, stop your fury and be calm. " In a few minutes, the winds ceased to blow, the rains subsided and calmness prevailed.

Several instances may be recounted in which Baba cured incurable and dangerous diseases by His mysterious powers. One Bhimji Patil of Narayanagaon suffered from a severe and chronic ailment which developed into tuberculosis. When all remedies failed, he was brought to Shirdi and taken to Baba. When the patient fell at Baba's feet and cried for mercy, Baba's heart melted. He said, " Stay, cast off all your anxiety, your sufferings have come to an end. However oppressed and troubled one may be, as soon as one steps into this Masjid one is on the path to happiness. The Fakir here is very kind and will protect all with love and kindness. " From the time Baba uttered these words of hope and mercy the malady took a favourable turn. Baba effected complete cure by two dreams in which the patient suffered intense pain.

One Dr. Pillai, an intimate Bhaktha of Baba, suffered once very badly from guinea-worm. When the pain was unbearable, knowing that it 'was for repaying past karma, he appealed to Baba through Kakasaheb Dixit to stop the pain and transfer the working of his karma to ten future births of his. When Baba was told of this, he exclaimed : " Why should he suffer for ten more births ? In ten days he can work out the sufferings and consequences of his past karma. " When he was brought before Baba, He said to the doctor, " Lie calmly and be at ease. Our karma is the cause of our happiness and sorrows : therefore put up with whatever that comes to you. Allah is the sole dispenser and protector, think of

Him always. Surrender yourself to His Feet completely and then see what He does. Now a crow will come and peck you and then you will recover. " The crow was no other than one Abdul who trampled accidentally upon the stretched feet of Dr. Pillai. By this all the guinea-worms were squeezed out at once and Dr. Pillai became all right in ten days exactly as predicted by Baba.

Baba's love for His devotees was so great that He even suffered pain and disease for their sake. When a lady devotee was staying at Shirdi with her young son, the boy got high fever which developed into bubonic plague. When the frightened mother approached Baba for giving her permission to return to Amraoti, Baba spoke kindly and softly to her and assured her that everything would be cleared. So saying He lifted up His Kafani and showed to all present four fully developed bubos and added how he had to suffer for His devotees, as their difficulties were also His.

Baba's kindness to His devotees is indescribable. When Ramachandra Patil fell seriously ill and was waiting for his last moment, Baba appeared before him and said that his death warrant had been withdrawn and that he would soon recover. True to Baba's words, Patil recovered. Baba also hinted that He was afraid of Tatya Patil passing away on Vijaya Dasami in 1918. Baba was also down with fever. On Vijayadasami Day, however, a curious thing happened. When everyone thought that Tatya would die, he recovered and Baba attained Maha-samadhi on that day. It appeared as if Baba gave up His life for Tatya. Baba alone knows why, as His ways are inscrutable.

The assurance of Baba that there would never be any dearth of food and clothes in His devotees' houses and that He would always look to and provide for their welfare should infuse confidence and comfort. Realising how precious the human life is, Baba repeatedly urged His devotees not to waste their time in efforts to procure material benefits, but to engage themselves in Mauna and Dhyana and in rendering service to, the poor and the sick and thereby serve God. He declared: " Without Rinanubandha no creature comes to you. Shri Hari will be certainly pleased if you give water to the thirsty, bread to the hungry and clothes to the naked. Be kind and considerate to all creatures. " Baba

identified Himself with sickly dogs, cats, flies, etc. " Feeding a hungry bitch is feeding me," He used to declare.

Faith is essential for God-realisation. Baba impressed on the devotees the importance of cultivating " Nishta" (faith) and " Saburi" (courageous patience). These two, if practised, carry one to the cherished goal. Baba's love and regard for His Guru are remarkable. Guru is God, and service to the Guru is our only Sadhana. Repetition of God's sacred names saves us from all and frees us from the cycle of births and deaths.

Baba's mission was to alleviate the sufferings of humanity, to give many good things to devotees at first and in the end to work out their emancipation. He is a rare gem among saints and a saviour of the first order. To Sri Sai Baba, Ram and Rahim were both the glorious appellations of the Divine Father, the temple and the mosque were both abodes of God, the Gita and the Koran were both holy scriptures. Baba preached no special cult. In His lifetime, Sri Rama Navami celebrations by Hindus and Sandal Processions by Muslims were celebrated side by side at Shirdi and this is being continued to this day. Thus, Baba taught that God is our common Father and that all religions lead to the same goal. Sri Sai Baba's message is relevant in the context of efforts made today for national integration.

Finally I may refer to what Baba stated that His devotees, who put sole trust in Him and look to Him sincerely for help, would receive what they desire and if a devotee were to call Him earnestly at any place, He would be there in an instant. I exhort devotees of Baba to follow His teachings both in letter and spirit always to speak the truth, to give alms to and help others in distress, to be kind to all creatures, not to think or talk ill of anyone, never to be jealous of other's prosperity but to be always contented. Utter the sacred name " Sai Ram", your lives will be fruitful and you will be happy. This was the advice given by Baba to His ardent devotees.

Baba's Promises

1. This is Dwarakamayi of ours on which you are sitting. This wards off all danger and anxieties from her children. Highly merciful is this Masidi Ayi. She is

the mother of those who place their entire faith in Her. If they are in danger, She will save them. Once a person climbs on Her lap, all his troubles are over.

2. What can the snake do to Dwarakamayi's children? They look on amused when the snake appears. When Dwarakamayi protects, can the snake strike ?

3. We have no need to fear. Strike, let me see how you can strike and kill.

4. This is not a mosque. It is Dwaraka. Those who seek refuge in her will never be harmed.

5. As soon as one climbs the steps of this Dwarakamayi, sufferings due to Karma are at an end and joy begins. That Fakir (God) is very kind and relieves your troubles.

6. When any one enters this Dwarakamayi, his goal (object) is achieved.

7. This place (Dwarakamayi) is for Tarana, i.e., saving people, and not Marana i.e., killing them. (Meaning of Dwarakamayi) Masudi Ayi., i.e., Dwarakamayi is Sai.

8. I do nothing. I receive nothing. Datta calls for his own. He has called for Rs. 15 as his due and given it to Masudi Ayi. So the money has been received (by me).

9. My eye (of vigilant supervision) is ever on those who love Me. Whatever you do, wherever you may be, ever bear this in mind, that I am always aware of everything you do.

10. If a person ever meditates on Me, repeats My name, sings of My deeds, and is thus transformed into *Me,* one's karma is destroyed. I always stay by his side.

11. You should always have truth with you. Then I always shall be with you, wherever you are, and at all times.

12. I will be with you, whenever and wherever you think of Me. Do not fear.

13. If a person perpetually thinks of Me, and makes Me his sole refuge, I am his debtor and will give My head to save him.

14. If a person ever dwells on Me in his mind and will not even taste food before offering it to Me, I am his slave. So also if he hungers and thirsts after Me, and treats all else as unimportant.

15. I am the bond.slave of my devotees (Bhaktaparadheena.) I love devotion.

16. He who withdraws his heart from wife, child and parents and loves Me is My real lover and he merges in Me like a river in the sea.

17. Sai Baba: The key of My treasury is now placed in your hands. Ask for anything you want, Rs. 5 or 100 a month or what you will and I will give it to you. Devotee declines to ask.

S. B. : Ask for something, I am anxious to give you, D : Is it agreed that You will grant anything I ask for? S. B.: Yes.

D : Then, Baba, I want this. In this and in any future birth that may befall to me, You should never part from me. You should always be with me.

S. B. : Yes. I shall be with you, inside you and outside you, whatever you may be or do.

18. My devotee feels me in You, in himself and in all creatures and sees all as his Guru. He will become Myself.

19. If you make Me the sole object of your thoughts and aims, you will gain Paramartha (Supreme Goal).

Look to Me, I will look to you. Trust in the Guru fully, ihat is the only Sadhana. The Guru is all the Gods.

20. If a person devotes his entire mind to Me and rests in Me, he need fear nothing for body and soul. If he sees Me and Me alone and Jistens to$_f$ talk about Me and is devoted to Me alone, he will reach God (Chaitanya). He who worships Me as Nitya, Suddha and Buddha comes to Me. QQ

What Devotion Can Achieve

-A. milkmaid used to supply milk to a Brahmin priest living on the other side of a river. Owing to the irregularities of the boat service, she could not supply him milk punctually every day. Once, being rebuked for going late, the poor woman said, "What can I do? I start early from my house, but have to wait for a long time at the river bank for the boatman and the passengers." The priest said, "Woman! they cross the ocean of life by uttering the name ' of God, and cannot you cross this little river ? "

The simple hearted woman became very glad at heart on learning this easy means of crossing the river. From the next day the milk was being supplied early in the morning. One day the priest said to the woman, " How is it that you are no longer late nowadays?" She said, I cross the river by uttering the name of the Lord as you told me to do, and don't stand now in need of a boatman. The priest could not believe this and said, "Can you show me how you cross the river?" The woman took him with her and began to walk over the water. Looking behind, the woman saw the priest in a plight and said, " How is it, Sir, that you are uttering the name of God with your mouth, but at the same time with your hands you are trying to keep your cloth untouched by water ? ' You do not fully rely on Him." Total self control and absolute faith in God are at the root of all miraculous deeds.

He who has not given up sinful ways, whose senses have not been restrained, who is unmeditative, and whose mind is devoid of peace, cannot attain Him, even by a highly cultivated intelligence.

Message For Mahasamadhi Day

ON the sacred Mahasamadhi Day, in 1918, Sri Sai Baba cast off his mortal coils and assumed His infinite aspect-Although He is not with us now, true to His promise that He would respond to the prayers of His devotees from His tomb, He is more active today than ever, in giving experiences to those who seek refuge in Him.

The Sai cult has spread far and wide and has become a powerful spiritual and moral force. It is appropriate on an occasion like this to recall what in essence constitute Sai's teachings and the secret of its appeal.

A central theme is the oneness of all creation, the interdependence and interrelatedness of all living things because there is only one substance which manifests itself as a lot of different objects as people, animals and plants. The realisation that all living beings are essentially the same removes the barrier which separates one from the other and produces a sense of unity. There can be no doubt that such an attitude would contribute to an atmosphere of tolerance and reasonableness in one's relation with others.

One of the intractable problems we face today is the apparent conflict between the interests of the individual and those of society and country. What is required is adjustment of the relations between the individual and groups by harmonising the needs of both. In such endeavours the guiding principle should be ' Dharma ' which is part of the fundamental moral law governing the functioning of the universe.

Fashioning ones life in the light of the tenets of the Sai cult with its emphasis on righteousness and application of ethics of life Provides a spiritual background to human existence. In this context the practical problems of everyday life take on a new meaning and significance. In effect it is a call to action endeavours are made compatible with the practical problems of day-to-day life

Sri Sai Baba's message is not addressed to any particular group or school of thought, but to all and for all time. Nothing in it becomes out of date because it has the quality of renewing itself to suit changing times, so that it is ever fresh and always relevant to the problems that confront us in the difficult times we are passing through. Apart from such practical aspects, Srj Sai Baba expressed profound philosophical truths shorn of their abstraction and in simple terms to bring them within the understanding of the common man. He emphasized that the pleasure and pain one experiences are the inevitable results of one's own action in this or in previous births, although good acts and good thoughts mitigate to some extent the effects of previous evil actions.

The concept of " Samsara " which pervades thinking at all levels in our society, finds expression in Sai's teaching as an endless round of life after life without beginning or end like the continual rotation of the *Chakra* of Sri Maha Vishnu. The Sai cult is replete with all the major themes of the religious and philosophic traditions of India. What we have to do on our part is not only to imbibe the valuable lessons implicit and explicit in Sai Baba's teachings, but also find for them practical application in everyday life. In this way one can make one's life purposeful and meaningful and also attain inner peace, mental happiness and contentment.

May Sri Sai Baba bless one and all !

Saint Saying

GOD is ever present everywhere. His presence is constant even in the deep recesses of your heart. Whatever you do alone within the closed doors of your room, He knows and sees. What is there to wonder at in this ? He perceives even the most secret thoughts that flit through your mind and of which even you are not always fully conscious. Nothing takes place anywhere at any time which is outside God's awareness, outside His direct observation.

H. H. SWAMI KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTION

Harbinger Of Peace And Harmony

SAI BABA has shown how persons of various religious persuasions can come together and live in peace and harmony. His message is now spreading with tremendous force throughout the length and breadth of India.

It is not out of place here to say something as regards myself. Before July 1939, I was not of a religious frame of mind, I took the world as it was. I was carried away by the fast enveloping modern fashion. In dress, manners and frame of mind, I was western to the hilt. That date is important in my life. It thoroughly changed my outlook in life and turned me religioun ward. I remember that memorable date with joy.

That day one of my best friends spoke to me of Sri SAI BABA of Shirdi. The words SRI SAI sent a thrill through me and the same night I saw SRI SAI in His physical form. Thereafter His blessings and grace carried me to the state in which I am now. His teachings and sayings and His doings leave no doubt that He was an AVATAR of GOD.

It is through religion that a just and real social order can be set up for the emancipation of man. History tells us that in the various epochs, high-souled personages, have taken birth and have used religions to ensure well-being of downtrodden and humbled humanity. Without religion, man's life in this mundane world is miserable.

Hinduism is the religion of humanity; it deals with the knowledge of self and takes one to the self-realisation which is oneness with the all pervading GOD. It has no conflict with other religions.

The AVATAR of SRI SAI BABA is an illustration of the above fact. He was a Mohamaden fakir to the followers of Islam; and *Samartha Sadguru* for the Hindus ; and a harbinger of peace and harmony to the various other sects. He showed how persons of various religious persuasions can come together and live in peace and harmony.

We are living in this mundane world which is full of turmoils and troubles and it is very easy to forget religions, which awaken us to the real state of affairs which we are in and show us the gate' of perpetual bliss and keep us away from being dragged down to the life of beasts, doing nothing but eat, drink and make merry. Such being the case, there must be some extraordinary thing which will now and then remind us who we are, and what .we should do, so that we may not be completely oblivious to our duties here. It is religion that fulfils this purpose, as Bhagwan Sri Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita.

" Whoever wants to see Me, in whatever light or form, I readily fulfil his desire, O thou son of Partha ; all people travel through paths chalked out by Me alone."

Saint Sayings

Truth is as impossible to be soiled by any outward touch as the sunbeam.

Truth is eternal ; the first of all gospels is this that a lie cannot endure for ever.

Life's real success lies in taking refuge at the feet of -God for God alone is the Lord, friend, dearest, lover of all beings. Those who get entangled in sense enjoyments fail to attain the lotus feet of God, which constitute supreme blessedness or beatitude.

He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me, of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never 'lose hold of Me.

Know that talking ill of others is sin -You must wholly avoid it. Many things may occur to the mind, but it gradually makes a mountain of a mole hill if you try to express them. Everything is ended if you forgive and forget.

H. H. SWAMI KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

Satyagraha By A Lady

One day Radha Bai Deshmukin came to Sai Baba for *upadesh,* got none and determined to ofler Satyagraha. She started fasting, which should only end with either death or with *upadesh* from Baba. After ten days of fruitless fast, the Honourable Dikshit interceded with Baba on her behalf and requested Him to utter some divine names in her presence. Baba sent for her and addressed her thus :

"Mother, why do you think of dying, and torture yourself? Take pity on Me, your child. I am a beggar. Look here. My Guru was a great saint and highly merciful. I fatigued Myself in trying to serve Him and yet He did not utter any *mantra* in My ear. Instead, He first shaved me clean and then begged of Me two paise. What He wanted was not metallic coin. He did not care even for gold, but only Nishta and Saburi, i. e., faith and courageous patience. I gave these to Him at once and He was pleased.

" Mother, Saburi is courage ; do not discard it. It ferries you across to the distant goal. It gives manliness to man, eradicates sin and dejection and overcomes all fear.

"For 12 years, I waited on my Guru, who is peerless and loving. How can I describe His love for Me ? When He was Dhyanasta (in love-trance), I sat and gazed at Him ; and We were both filled with Bliss. I cared not to turn My eye upon anything else. Night and day I pored upon His face with an ardour of love that banished hunger and thirst. The Guru's absence, even for a second, made Me restless. I meditated upon nothing but the Guru and had no goal or object other than the Guru. Unceasingly fixed upon Him, was My mind. Wonderful indeed is the art of my Guru ! I wanted nothing but the Guru and He wanted nothing but my love. Apparently actionless, He never neglected me, but always protected me by His glance.

“That Guru – I tell thee truthfully, sitting as I do in this Masjid - never chanted any mantra into my ear; nor do I chant any into yours. Go thou and do likewise.

"If you make Me the sole object of your thoughts and aims, you will attain Paramartha, the supreme goal. Look at Me with undivided attention; so will I look at you. This is the only truth, my Guru taught me. The four sadhanas and the six sastras are not necessary. With entire confidence, trust your Guru. That is enough."

The lady bowed, accepted the advice and gave up Satyagraha.

Saint Sayings

Never talk about the faults of others, no matter how bad they may be. Nothing is ever gained by that. You never help one by telling about his faults, you do him an injury, and injure yourself as well.

Truth, purity and unselfishness — wherever these are 'present, there is no power below or above the sun to crush the possessor thereof, Equipped with these, one individual is able to face tie whole universe in opposition. In the case of a seeker, the heart goes first, then comes the tongue. In the case of a wordly wise man, the tongue goes first, and then the heart.

Success and failure, achievement and frustration, -health and ill-health, attraction and repulsion, are all working out according to laws starting from the basic *karma* (past actions) of the individual. These sequences have to be gone through. Unnecessary worry, annoyance and bitterness do not reduce the intensity of what one is passing through. A certain amount of cheerfulness regarding all unpleasant happenings as so much "' account settled " makes the burden of life lighter.

H. H, SWAMI KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

The Role Of The Guru

"GURU is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is Maheswara, Guru is the all-pervading Brahman," so declare the Vedas and the Upanishads. One can acquire several rare benefits by the grace of a Guru. Such is the greatness of a Sadguru! Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi is one among them and He used to declare many

a time that one should have complete faith in his Guru. Guru's grace is our only Sadhana. Sri Sai Baba cautioned His devotees that they should not change Gurus. Every one should stick to his own Guru with confidence, whatever be the merits of other Gurus. Sri Sai Baba also stressed that we should realise Brahman before death and that realisation will give " Kevala Adwaita Sukham " and that it could be achieved only through the grace of a Guru.

Narada, a great devotee of Lord Vishnu, is one of the great sages that our country has produced. He is always roaming about the three worlds singing the holy name of Narayana. It is said that, in his previous birth, Narada was the son of a poor and helpless widow, who was serving Mahatmas in a village. The boy took great delight in listening to their learned discourses and ate only their *Uchista* (leavings). Those had purified him and created in him an intense longing to realise God. As a result, he spent every miniute of his life in intense meditation and constant contemplation of God, through which he was able to have/vision of Narayana, who granted him the boon that he would be born as a great devotee in the next birth. It is obvious from this episode that there is nothing greater than the grace of a Guru.

Ekalavya became an expert in archery on account of his devotion to his Guru, Dronacharya. Tyagaraja, the saint-musician and a sincere devotee of Lord Sri Rama, stressed the importance of Bhakti in the following lines:—" Sangita Gnanamu Bhaktivina sanmargamu galade..." " Knowledge of music bereft of devotion, is valueless and cannot secure salvation."

At Shirdi, when Sri Sai Baba was in the flesh, He inaugurated the Guru Poornima by an injunction to H. V. Sathe's father-in-law, to whom he said: " Do you not know that this is Guru Poornima? Bring your worship materials and do your Pooja. " Guru Poornima, also known as Vyasa Poornima, which occurs in the month of Ashadha, is deemed a very important and sacred day from time immemorial. It is dedicated to the worship of Vyasa Bhagawan the author of the Vedas, the Maha Bharata (the fifth Veda) and the Bhagavata. In the Vishnu Sahasranamam, Vyasa has been described as 'Vishnurupaya' and Lord Vishnu as ' Vyasarupaya.' It may, therefore, be said that Vyasa is Guru-God. On the day

of Guru Pooja at Shirdi, devotees used to worship the feet of Sri Sai Baba and present him shawls, coins, fruits, flowers, grain, sandal, etc. The benefits that accrue to the devotees performing Padapuja to a Guru on this auspicious day are invaluable.

It is my earnest desire and appeal that every religious institution in our country should celebrate the holy Guru Poornima in a fitting manner and that every devotee should try to stick to his own Guru and follow the principles laid down by Sri Sai Baba to attain Paramartha in this very life. May Sri Sai Baba shower His choicest blessings on all His devotees !

Om Shanti: Shanti: Shantihi.

Saints Sayings

If any man or creature comes to you, do not discourteously drive him away, but receive him well and treat him with due respect. Sri Hari will certainly be pleased if you give water to the thirsty, bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked and your verandah to strangers for sitting and resting.

Our karma is the cause of our pleasure and pain; therefore put up with whatever comes to you. God is the sole dispenser and protector, think of Him always. He will take care of you. Surrender yourself to His feet with body, , mind, wealth and speech i. e., completely, and then see what He does.

H. H. SWAMY KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

What The Guru Does

THE conception of a Guru varies with various persons according to their evolutionary stages and temperaments. It may vary from a physical, personal, pedagogue-like Guru to the highest and the grandest conception of a Guru—like Sri Dakshina-murti, as the poet exclaims :

Ah! The wonder under the banyan tree !
There sits the teacher, a youth !
The disciples elders,
The teaching is silence.
And the disciples' doubts are dispelled.

The Guru is like the brilliant pole star shedding light on the dark life of the pilgrim on the spiritual path and pointing to the right direction. There are men on the path away from light, " Pravrittimarga." Then they are proceeding in the right direction from darkness to light. The role of the Guru is to set the feet of the spiritual aspirant on the noble and righteous path of holiness leading to the ultimate. He watches, guides and helps the faltering steps of the aspirant as a fond mother anxiously watches over her infant.

There are many paths leading to this ultimate goal, a few of them being through the practice of gnana, karma and bhakti which may be translated as the paths of wisdom, action without expecting a reward, and pure devotion. Most aspirants are attracted to the path of devotion. In this path there should be absolute self-surrender to Guru or the deity or the higher self without any idea of separateness. This is the divine union as of the true lover and the loved one so beautifully described in the lives of Saint Meera and Sri Andal. Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi is one of the Sadgurus who are ever ready to help the sincere and devoted aspirants. By His enlightened life and practical teaching He emphasized the Bhakti aspect of spiritual life and the predominant part played by a Sadguru.

Sri Sai was pained to see people with the mind of a butterfly flitting from one Guru to another. The ancient adage, " A rolling stone gathers no moss," is as true in spiritual life as is mundane matters. Once a devotee was lured away by the so—called saintliness and holiness of another Guru and left his own. It was moonshine and within a few months he returned to his former Guru, disillusioned and with peace of mind, serenity and the spiritual exaltation which he had before all lost. Then he learnt that one pointedness is necessary in order to be able to follow one guru always.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa often emphasized the same truth and said, that the disciple should never criticise his Guru. He must implicitly obey what ever the Guru says. A couplet in Bengali says : " Though my Guru may visit the tavern, still my Guru is a holy Rai Nityananda and though my Guru may visit the unholy haunts of drunkards and sinners still to me he is my own pure and faultless Guru." Unless there is one-pointedness, nothing good or great can be

achieved here or hereafter. So having selected a Sadguru we must surrender ourselves to him with firm faith, and deep devotion, with patience and perseverance, as Sri Sai had advised devotees, " Stick to your own Guru with unabated faith, whatever the merits of the other Gurus and little of your own. We must not give up our attachment to our own Guru, but even more firmly rest in him and him alone. "

It is not what the Guru teaches or blows into one's ears that would matter. The contact with him, the privilege to be with him within the sphere of the influence of his presence and the contemplation in devotional love to him would lead to the Guru's grace. The very presence of the Guru thrills the heart, elevates the soul and ennobles the aspirant. Sri Sai thus describes His own marvellous experience of His Guru which enabled Him to attain Godhead. " For 12 years I waited upon My Guru. How can I describe His love to Me ? I sat and gazed on Him and we both were filled with bliss. I cared not for anything else. Night and day *Ipoted'on* His face with an ardour of love that banished all thirst and hunger. The Guru's absence even for a second made Me restless. I meditated upon nothing but the Guru—My eyes unceasingly fixed on Him. I wanted nothing from the Guru and He wanted nothing but love from Me. Apparently inactive, He never neglected Me and always protected Me with a glance. The Guru never blew any mantra in My ear. By His grace I obtained my present state. Making the Guru the sole object of one's own thoughts and aims, one attains Paramartha, the supreme goal. This is the truth the Guru taught me: The four sadhanas and six shastras are not necessary. Trusting the Guru fully is enough."

These words of Sri Sai Baba reveal to us the intensity of the bhakta's mind and the ecstasy into which a bhakta is wafted. Thus in silence, heart full of love, in mute meditation, gaze and Jove was Sri Sai elevated to the realization of the divinity in Himself and the divinehood of mankind. This is the supreme role played by a Sadguru in the life of a spiritual aspirant. The bhakta is safe in the hiaven of the Guru God. A Sadguru takes great care of his disciples as Sri Sai had assured, " My eye is on those that love Me, whatever they do and wherever they are. Bear in mind I am always with you whenever you think of Me. If one

meditates upon Me, I stay by his side always. If one thinks of Me and makes Me his refuge, I am his debtor. If one tastes not food without first offering it to me, I am his slave. I am Bhakta Paradhina. I will be with you, inside and outside you and all around you."

Saint Sayings

God is in all men, but all men are not in God; that is why they suffer.

Divine power is greater in those who are honoured, respected and obeyed by a large following than in those who have no such influence.

He who has seen the Lord is a changed being.

Anger is a sign of tamas. In anger man loses all *jf* discrimination. Hanuman set fire to Lanka, he had not the sense then to apprehend that it might burn the place where Sita was staying.

If you have faith, you will attain to that for which you long.

H. H. SWAMI KESAYAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

The Easy Way To Divine Bliss

The Saint of Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, has said that the way to reach God in this Kali Yuga is by love and that four things are asked of everyone who would tread this path, They are :

1. Sing God's name (Nama) and His Divine glories (Vibhuthis).
2. Keep holy company (Satsang) and avoid worldliness.
3. Do your daily duty that falls to your lot without egoism; while doing it (nishkamya bhav), do it as sacrifice to god (Iswararpana) and never forget Him.

Always have longing in your heart for God realisation and let that longing reflect itself in tears. People, Sri Ramakrishna said, weep for children, for wife, for honours of this earth to satiate their fleeting desires. How many weep for God ? " Weep for the Divine Mother ", the saint says, " She will not leave Her child in desolation. She will surely come and greet you and lift you up to her lap."

Mukta Bai, a girl of only fourteen, said that if one loves the Lord more than the most precious thing in the world surely one will be drawn to His Lotus feet when one's life on earth comes to an end. The great Adi Sankara, the apostle of Advaita Siddhantam, said that among the instruments of " Mukti ", " Bhakti" is the

easiest and that by Para Bhakti the mind is completely rid of all impurities and Vasanas, and is drawn towards the Lord. With the Lord's Grace, he said, the clouds of ignorance in the mind of the devotee that stand as a barrier disappear quickly. Wisdom shines forth like the Sun in all brilliance and the individual (Jivatma) becomes one -smrf with the Paramatma. Sri Sankara's immortal song, "Bhaja Govindam", points this out clearly. Saradamani Devi (The Holy Mother) stressed the need for full concentration while meditating on God, and said that repeating the name of God once with the mind controlled full of devotion is equivalent to a million repetitions with the mind away from God.

You may have an idea of what constitutes Bhakti and how every one of us old and young, men and women, rich and poor strong and disabled, cultured and uncultured—can follow the path of devotion to attain salvation. To be deeply devoted to God, we should have an idea in the first place. God is everywhere. There is no place where He is not. Everything rests in Him. He resides in the heart of every being. He is in the King, in the beggar, in the animal, in the minutest worm, in plants and also in inanimate objects. That is why in the Gita the Lord said, " He who seeth Me everywhere and seeth everything in Me, of Him I will never lose hold and he shall never lose hold of Me."

The Lord further said that Yogi who worships God abiding in all beings liveth in Him for ever, whatever his mode of living. For this reason the Lord has emphasized in the Eleventh Chapter of the Gita that the devotee who dedicates every act to God and does not have hatred towards any being is very dear to Him. The Lord appeared in a stone pillar to save his devotee in distress (Prahlada). The devotion of Akrura is regarded as the purest for the reason that God is most dear to one who is by very nature and disposition kind to all creatures. Gautama Buddha also has taught us the greatness of Ahimsa (non-cruelty to beings) and the superiority of love for all. As a true disciple of Jesus Christ Saint Francis loved all creatures. To him all things were sacred -and nature was an image of God. " Animals and plants are creation of my Heavenly Father," said He and took delight in flowers and embraced all creatures in love. He carried little worms to the roadside saying to himself, " Am I not a tiny worm?"

In short this should be the general outlook of every devotee who is sincere to attain emancipation by following the path of Love. He should commit to his memory the grand truth contained in those famous lines of Coleridge :

"He prayeth best, who loveth best All things both great and small ; For the dear God who loveth us, He made and loveth all."

May Sri Sai Baba guide us all in the path of devotion and bless us !

Om Shanthi! Shanthi!! Shanthihi!!!

Bhakti, Highest Ideal for Man

BHAKTI, Karma and Gnana form the triple noble paths leading to the ultimate reality, God. These three paths are not very marked or exclusive of one another. They depend upon the types and the tendencies of the persons following them. In the end, all the paths blend into one another. This is the greatest message of Vedanta.

These great seers who had trodden these glorious paths say that the Karma Marga needs one-pointedness and steadfastness of purpose in the performance of unselfish action without any expectation of reward. It is said that all the Prophets of the world, with the noble exception of Lord Buddha, had ulterior motives, such as some holding that they were incarnations of God, others that they were messengers of God to move them to unselfish action. Thus true Karmayogins are very rare.

The Gnana Marga requires favourable circumstances and strenuous practice. This path cannot be trodden unless a man is physically very healthy and free from all worldly attachments. The Bhakti marga offers scope of development for the man in the street as well as for the great intellectual giant, each according to his capacity. But their ultimate achievements are the same.

A Karmayogin attains God realisation through a system of ethics and religion, through unselfishness and by good works. The same problem is solved by a Gnani with his reason and inspiration. A Bhakta achieves his goal of union with God through his intense love for God. Chandilya Rishi observed that " extreme love for God is bhakti." As we evince anxious concern for a sick wife or a dying son, so a bhakta will have intense yearning for God. As Sri Sai Baba of

Shirdi said, there is neither set time nor place to think of God ; we should think of Him always, anywhere.

Purity is the *sine qua non* of spiritual life. Cleansing the body, keeping aloof from wicked persons and moving in the company of good person is external purification. Internal purification is more difficult. It consists in speaking truth, serving the poor, helping the needy. It is truly said that whatever a man says who has purified his inner self for twelve years without entertaining a single vicious idea during that period is sure to come true. This is the power of truth. One who has cleansed both the inner and outer selves is alone capable of Bhakti. The great quality of Bhakti is that it purifies the mind and establishes love for the Supreme Lord.

The path of Bhakti is the path of worship. To a novice external worship and repetition of the Lord's names are means of developing concentration. Meditation on the great qualities of the Lord is the next step leading to the stage of contemplation where the union between the Jiva and the Brahman is achieved. This is the highest stage because we cannot conceive of anything higher, as God is perfection. Then the Bhakta becomes unmindful of the desire for knowledge and salvation or concern for birth and death. What he really yearns for is to be always engaged in divine service. It is at this stage, when a Bhakta sees God in everything, everything in God, that he attains perfect Bhakti. This Bhakti is the highest ideal for man, no matter whether he achieves this ideal here or hereafter, but a steady progress towards it will in the end bring him nearer the ideal, God.

Another kind of Bhakti is to pray for the welfare of all in the world. Now that freedom for India is won, let us pray God and all the saints, living or dead to bestow their choicest blessings on us so that we can live happily under our own rule.

Saint Sayings

Be as devoid of vanity as the cast-away leaf carried away by the high wind.

The more a person conceals his devotional practices from others the better for him.

H. H. SWAMY **KESAVAIAHJI'S** SELECTIONS

Always Trust Your Guru

IN the meshes of the materialism of the present times, religion fails to evoke any thought or attention. Religion in its simple significance is faith in truth, which is but one of the several epithets of the Supreme One.

Faith is the state of mind towards the All Supreme. It is a devotional surrender for the protection and Grace of the Lord.

Sri Sai Baba preferred the sadhanas involving faith and bhakti. He advocated worship of several things—images, coins pictures, padukas etc. He has no mean place for the Guru, the giver oflhana and the solidifier of faith.

The path to the goal is rugged, and Sri Sai Baba warns us that it is infested with hungry wolves and tigers and with yawning pits to negotiate and stresses the need for a guide or Guru. In brief, the attainment of Jnana is largely dependent upon our Guru.

To aspirants for Jnana, the mere acquisition of a Guru alone can never suffice. Lucky indeed must be he that finds the proper guru at whose feet he is privileged to sit and learn. Hindus, before they start on any of their prayers, first invoke their Gurus to lead them aright and to be acceptable to their Gods. A subjugation of the mind and will and absolute faith in the Guru are the essentials of a true Bhakta.

Sri Sai says: " Stick to your own Guru with unabated faith whatever the merits of the other Gurus. We must not give up our attachment to our own Guru but even more firmly rest in Him and Him alone."

Ajar kept in water is full of water inside and outside. Thus the soul immersed in God sees the all pervading spirit within and without.

H. H. SWAMI **KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTION**

No Mukti Without Bhakti

Neither by reciting the Vedas nor by acting up to the Sastraic injuctions I am. attainable; but one who meditates on Me with adoration gets at Me easily and I am with Him" says the Bhagvan in " Siva Gita."

However much the devotee suffers he should not give up his devotion to God. This is best illustrated from the life of Tukaram.

There was a Brahmin at Dehu (in Maharashtra) by name Ramachandra Bhatt. Being a great Pandit and a strict follower of Sanatana Dharma, Bhat was greatly perturbed by the doings of Tukaram. One day he approached the village chief and said : " Tukaram is a Sudra by birth ; yet not only has he learned the Vedas but also is imparting the sacred lore to men of all castes. He is abusing the Karma Yoga established by ancient rishis and proclaming the supremacy of Bhakthi Yoga. With the aid of his melodious music, he attracts many followers to the detriment of Vedic religion." He requested the chief to punish Tukaram and save the Vedic religion. The chief ordered the village Patil to expel Tukaram from the village.

Coming to know of this, Tukaram sought the help of Ramachandra Bhat. He accosted the latter while the latter was bathing in the river Indrani. On seeing Tukaram, Bhat flared up at him, " You are spoiling the Varnashrama Dharma. You disregard the Vedas and Sastras of yore. Your *abhangams* make the hearers commit sinful acts." He asked him not to sing *abhangams* any more.

Stricken with sorrow at these words, Tukaram quiety asked what should become of those *abhangams* he had already sung. He got the answer that they should be thrown into the Indrani. Sad at heart Tukaram bundled his *abhangams* and nearing the Vjtoba temple, prayed : " Oh Lord, once you ordained me to sing *abhangams* and now you enjoin me through Ramachandra Bhat to cast them away into the river." So crying, he threw his compositions into the Indrani and left the place.

This news spread to the village of Dehu and the neighbouring villages. That night to many of the villagers, God Vitoba appeared in dream and asked them to get the abhangams from the river and restore them to Tukararn. They did so. Some days after Ramachandra Bhat went to a holy place with his daughter. There he was bathing in a well in a garden belonging to a Muslim fakir. The fakir wanted to know who he was. Enraged at being spoken to by a non Hindu, Ramachandra Bhat hurled abuse at the fakir who replied in hindi. Bath over,

Ramachandra Bhat began to feel a burning sensation over his entire frame. He could not sit, stand or He down. Not knowing what to do, he went to the Gnaneswari Math and there prayed and slept. Gnaneswari appeared in his dream and said that the burning was the result of teasing Tukaram and unless he begged his pardon, there was no way of escape.

Bhat was on the horns of a dilemma. He was ashamed to seek the help of Tukaram. But seeing no way of escape, he wrote a letter to Tukaram detailing his sufferings. He got back a reply from Tukaram which said: "One whose mind is spotless and pure has no enemies. To him all creatures are alike. Fall at the feet of Vitoba." When he finished reading, Bhat felt free from the burning sensation. Realising the greatness of Tukaram, he started out to meet him. Tukaram coming to know of this, approached him and made his obeisance. Bhat prostrated himself before Tukaram and entreated his pardon for his misdeeds. He became an ardent disciple of Tukaram and commenced his bhajans with Tukaram's abhangams.

A true Bhakta is always near God.

Saint Saying

'" One develops various propensities according to the company one moves in and one seeks the company congenial to one's propensities.

H. H. SWAM I KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTION

'Dhyana' And Divine Love

IT was Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who said, " Fear not, O afflicted souls ! The greatest atonement for all your sins, the sure way of ending all your miseries and the highest means of attaining Divine Bliss is meditation on Sriman Narayana and the reciting of Sri Hari's name." Goswami Tulsidas truly declared, " At last I have discovered the Chintamani Rama Kama, I shall treasure it with love, close to my heart and cling to it."

" Repeat the name of Vasudeva with mind overflowing with pure love ; all your troubles perish root and branch/' said the great Sri Madhavacharya.

The name of God is verily the oil in which the wick of the "Self" is to be drenched and then ignited by the fire of God, as Saint Kabirdas very beautifully put it.

Among the infinite variety of births, human birth is the most precious one and is also hard to get. Having obtained a human body with all faculties, our one purpose in life is to know the "innermost Self" (Antaryami) which is no other than "Parameswara" (Supreme Being) and attain God realization (Moksha) in this very life. So, our constant endeavour should be to search within, to cleanse our heart of all impurities arising out of Raga and Dwesha and fill it with the divine nectar of Devotion to the Lord. Though there are several paths to 'Moksha', the easiest and the one declared by Brahma and great seers like Sri Sai Baba as suitable for this age is Dhyana (constant meditation) on the Lord and repetition of His holy name and Bhakti, Supreme devotion and divine love to" the Lord.

The one common doubt that arises in the minds of all devotees is whether it is ever possible to remember God or utter His name even when one is immersed in ever so many worldly pursuits and plunged in the miseries of worldly existence in day-to-day life. Lord Krishna has given a beautiful answer to this in the " Gita " wherein he has enjoined on all to do their legitimate duty faithfully, sincerely and cheerfully as "sacrifice" to the Lord (Krishnarpanam) without the idea, "I am doing" and do worship without an eye for reward. " Duty for the sake of duty and love for the sake of love " should be our motto. All other aims are worthless. This total surrender of the fruits of all our actions to God and dedication of the mind, body and soul to God burns up the huge stock of one's sins, however great they may be and accumulated in a series of births, and leads us on to the Lotus Feet of the Lord.

In Dhyana (meditation), one loses the idea of one's self completely. In fact, our little self vanishes and merges gradually in the Divine. A person who has thus acquired concentration of mind (Dharana) by constant practice and steadfast devotion is really a fortunate man, as very easily he gets divine grace and attains Supreme Bliss. We have Lord Krishna's own grand assurance in the " Gita," " Na Me Bhakta Pranasyathi "— "My devotee never perishes." Not only that, the Lord

has promised full security and welfare to all who surrender everything without reservation to Him.

There are two great inner enemies in us. They are desire and anger. Unless we conquer these and master them, it is idle to expect deliverance. So we must eschew them without any reserve. Rama is not for him who is swayed by Kama and Krodha. These are the two frightful gateways to hell.

If we practise self-control and self-denial, we are certain to lead a pure, contented and fruitful life. We should always be clean and pure in soul, mind and body. As Sai Baba used to advise His devotees often, we should constantly meditate on the " Sadvastu" and conduct a self-enquiry, " Who am I ?" " Where is this world?" This *Upasana* of the Sadvastu should be carried on with perseverance in solitude, withdrawing our minds completly from the objects of the senses. Lord Krishna, the flute bearer of Brindavan, in the celestial " Gita " and the great Sri Kapila in " Srimad Baghavatham " have described how one should practise meditation. One should select a secluded place exclusively for meditation and be seated there Holding the body erect but with ease. One should control all the senses and practise Pranayama, Having controlled the mind (Dharana) and fixing it on one of the centres of consciousness, one should concentrate on the Divine attributes and remain steadfast in devotion. When the mind and heart become calm and pure, one will learn to dwell in Divine consciousness (Suddha Chaitanya) which is a cave as Sri Sai Baba has put it. One who enters that cave never returns to this world of death and pain, but becomes the cave itself.

" Love is divine." Though love is unlimited and knows no bounds, each limited ego (Jivatma) partakes *to* the extent of its capacity and exhibits it. The love which seeks God for the sake of love alone and by means of which we offer our body, mind and soul to God whole-heartedly is Satvika love. By simple, child-like and whole-hearted love to Lord Krishna, the Gopis attained eternal bliss, which is a good example for this.

God dwells in all creatures. There is no place where He is not. So, we should be kind and considerate to every creature in this world. One should give food to

the hungry, water to the thirsty and clothes to the naked and the poor. One should see the Lord in the learned and the ignorant, rich and poor, the king and the beggar and even in animals like a dog. This " Karun-yam " and " Samatvam " purify the heart and cleans^ it of all impurities and when God's grace descends at last, one gets emancipation easily.

But it will not be enough to see the Lord in all creatures. Meditate on God and do the injunctions laid down in the scriptures. Above all these, one should cultivate intense devotion (Viswa Prema Para Bhakti) to God as the source and permeator of all, the All-Merciful, the All-Poweful, the Most Supreme and our great Saviour and Friend.

" Mathru Devo Bhava " (Mother), " Pithru Devo Bhava " (Father) and " Acharya Devo Bhava " (Brahma Nishta Guru) are the three entities who help us to attain Him. If we are really sincere, earnest and thirst after God realisation, as the Chataka bird thirsts for water we are sure to attain His grace sooner or later. Having obtained human birth, which is very hard to obtain let us all try to taste this ambrosia (Amritam) in the form of divine love waiting for us and may we all with the grace of Sri Sai Baba attain 'Moksha' (emancipation) and 'Kaivalyam' (Divine Bliss) in this very life.

Types Of Devotees

IT is the purpose of this article to focus attention on the essentials and the barest minimum that any devotee should learn to enter into this noble path of spirituality, the highest aspiration of mankind.

Like all great teachers, Sai Baba has rightly been claimed as the .epitome of all virtues. Baba often told his devotees: "Your servant's servant I am. I am your debtor." "I am purified by your darshan. It is a great grace on your part to have given Me the sight of your feet."

He alone is an exclusive devotee who is never shaken from the belief that the entire creation as a manifestation of God. It is not easy to give up attachment to worldly things and shake off the feeling of " I." It is true " I " and " mine " are the result of ignorance. The right attitude born of knowledge is that God is the Master and that all things belong to Him. Till we get this attitude, let us cherish the idea

that we are God's servants and His devotees. Even this implies a trace of ego and as shown in the following example, this will disappear with the knowledge of truth.

"Once Rama asked Hanuman, 'How do you look on Me? Hanuman replied, " O Rama, as long as I have the feeling of " I," I see that Thou art the Whole and I am a part ; Thou art the Master and I am Thou." Thus the first step in the life of a devotee is humility.

Self-surrender marks the next step of a devotee. A devotee has to surrender to God himself wholly and exclusively, including his five senses. Then he becomes a personal servant of God. The entire responsibility for his maintenance and protection is taken up by the Lord. As said in the " Gita", " O Arjuna, take refuge in Me. I shall deliver you from all sins." Did not Sri Sal Baba say, " Cast all your burdens on Me and I shall bear them."

Then, the devotee becomes free from sin and misery because all his actions are performed as a divine duty without a thought for the result. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa advised his devotees to surrender themselves completely to God, setting aside the three veils—shame, hatred and fear, which hide God from us. Surrendering his body, heart and mind, family, wealth, possessions, desires, cravings and in fact every other thing at the feet of God, the devotee is freed from anxiety and worry. He sees God in everything and everything in God ; loves all beings in the Universe as manifestations of God. All his works become God's works. All his thoughts, words and deeds are centred in God. Thus the natural results of this self-surrender are intense devotion towards God and love towards all beings in the Universe. Such a devotee has no disappointments in life and has no fear of death. He rises above the dichotomies of the world and gains equanimity and -poise which distinguish him as the flower of humanity.

A mere child, Prahlada was subjected to every unimaginable torture, such as letting loose on him a mad elephant, exposing to the bites of venomous snakes, dropping from the top of a mountain or shutting up in a room filled with poisonous gases. But he neither feared nor met with death. What was the secret of Prahlada's power ? His firm faith in God.

Baba often used to say that once a person has faith in God, he has achieved everything. There is nothing greater than faith. Sri Rama who was God Himself had to build a bridge to cross the sea to Lanka, but Hanuman who had immense faith in Rama cleared the sea in one jump. Sri Ramakrishna says : " As is a man's meditation, so is his feeling of love. " As is man's feeling of love, so is his gain. Faith is the root of all." Mira drank the cup of poison in one draught and Haridas bore gladly the strokes of the lash all the while repeating the name of Hari and praying to God to pardon his persecutors. A devotee who has such intense faith does not bear any ill-will towards his enemies. His faith is so unshakeable that he actually sees that the whole world is full of God and everything in it is manifestation of God.

The extraordinary patience displayed by a devotee towards those who harm him should not be interpreted as cowardice. The devotee's heart is full of virtues like forgiveness, spirit of nonviolence, compassion and love. Thus, forgiveness, non-violence compassion, etc., are the virtues of the hero and the characteristic of a true devotee is a courageous patience or Saburi, as Sai Baba has put it.

There are different types of devotees. It is the lot of many to tread the hard and steep path through suffering, sacrifice and toil. They need a long and arduous spiritual discipline and practice. There are some who are Nitya Siddhas. Since their birth, their spiritual consciousness is awake. They are born like Sri Sai Baba to impart spiritual illumination to others to lift a little of the heavy *karma* of the world.

There is yet another class of devotees—Kripa Siddhas on whom the grace of God descends all of a sudden. Within a short time, they attain great vision and knowledge. In short, a true devotee is one who "cannot live without God; so also God cannot live without His devotee." He has humility and lost all traces of ego. He has surrendered himself completely his body and soul to God. He has abundant faith (Nishta) and courageous patience (Saburi). These are the high hall-marks of a true devotee. Judging by this touch stone, let each fix hearings in the wide ocean of life and follow the light which is within every one of us.

Saint Sayings

Stick to your own Guru with unabated faith, whatever the merits of other Gurus and however little the merits of your own.

GOD manifests all his powers for the benefit of His devotees.

The cries of all jackals are the same- So are the teachings of all the wise ones the same.

Like Fans are redundant when the wind blows; prayers and penances may be given up when the grace of God descends.

H, H. SWAMI KESAVAfAHJI'S SELECTIONS

PATHS OF DEVOTION

Many are the paths leading to liberation. Though the paths are many, the ultimate goal is the same. From time immemorial the Bhakti marga has been peculiarly suited to the genius of the Indian masses. Hence it is that devotion has a special appeal to all classes of people in India and legion are the saints who came under the all-pervading influence of devotion and have trodden this golden path of spirituality, immortality and liberation. These saints have left behind them foot prints on the sands of time, indelible land marks for the guidance of faltering humanity to traverse this steep and rugged path of devotion. One of these perfected men is Sri Sadguru Samartha Ramdas, the great saint of Maharashtra. He has laid down the following types of devotion:

The first is Sravana, i.e., hearing spiritual knowledge. This is the foundation of all spiritual life and the quintessence of a devotee's very being. He must listen daily, hourly, throughout his life, the attributes, praises and the name of God till at last the complete meaning of what he hears becomes part and parcel of his consciousness.

Kirtana, i. e., singing the praise of God develops spirituality not only of the person who performs but also of those who listen. Riches and women are capricious allurements in this path. Music and play of the instruments should not make one forget God, but they should be aids to intensify one's zealous devotion and celestial joy.

Smarana, i. e., remembering the name of God is another aid to spiritual progress. All spiritual knowledge is revealed knowledge and we can only get it through the grace of a Sadguru. By constantly meditating on the name of God, apart from overcoming all difficulties on the path, we can realize God with delirious ecstasy.

Pada Sevana, i.e., resorting to the feet of the Guru is a means of spiritual development. If this is not physically possible, we must mentally prostrate ourselves at the feet of the Guru with reverence and humility.

Archana, i. e., worship of God is another type of devotion. This is real or mental worship of the various images of God and offering Him the best things of life, with deep yearning after God realization.

Namaskara is the same as archana, i. e., bowing down or prostrating ourselves before God or God-like persons. This entails such noble qualities as humility, dedication, worship, surrender and patient waiting with hope and faith for the grace of God.

Dasya, i. e., service of God is possible in two ways, either through doing service which will turn the people towards God or rendering service to bhaktas is really service to God.

Sakhyata, *i.* e., friendship of God is a type of devotion which is most difficult to practise. Human friendship rests on a compromise of give and take policy, whereas friendship with God is uncompromising determination to give all and lose all, if need be. Our human friends may desert us in times of need, but God, though He appears indifferent to our sacrifices, really watches over us with kindness. To an impatient devotee it would appear that God does not reciprocate our love. He leaves us uncared for and disappointed. Such a devotee will become angry with God and even hate Him because our little desires are not fulfilled. God's friendship is undying, enduring and everlasting.

His grace is perennial. If there are disappointments and difficulties, we must suffer them calmly and courageously. Suffering and disappointments form an integral part of spiritual life. Without them spiritual life is not tested. The key to achieve the friendship of God is with the devotee alone. God, being the

innermost reality, is enshrined in our heart and is the breath of our life. We must have firm faith and love towards God. All our thoughts, feelings and actions have their reflection in God. The more sincere and truthful we are the more are we drawn near and bound to God. Then God becomes more than Mother, Father or Friend to us.

Atma Nivedana, i. e., the annihilation of the self or ego and achieving unity with God. This is the crowning glory of devotional life. Though there are several ways to gain this unity with God, the best means is through constant meditation on pure ideas about God. Impure ideas are got rid of. Then dualism yields to the dawn of advaitic experience. Through this intuitive perception the Sadhaka is drawn towards God with magnetic fascination. Every moment of his life he will feel the compelling and dominating influence of God and will ultimately merge in Him. Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi was one such saint who lived in holy communion with God every moment of his life. May he inspire us to tread this righteous path of devotion with concentrated vigour fearless integrity and dauntless

Om Shanti! Shanti!! Shantihi

Saint Sayings

When you undertake anything, carry it out thoroughly or do not undertake it.

Fate is more powerful than human effort.

Ambition destroys the understanding of men

Where there is Dharma, there sorely will be Victory

A heart *full of* hate can know no contentment. Hate is a cruel fire.

Not by studying any sastra does mart become wise. It is by association with the great in Wisdom that he gets-wisdom.

Courage is man’s salvation in danger.

H. H. SWAMY KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

Divine Love

WE are living in a rapidly changing world. Science and its marvellous achievements have shaken our old faiths and a new vista has been opened to modern man. Material advancement .has placed modern man in an advantageous position. The forces generated by science and democracy have been operating in a variety of ways to transform human life.

Our old values and the good old days are going out fast, never to return. " The age demands of our citizens an understanding of these forces, an acceptance of them and an intelligent assimilation of their values so that India may forge a new character and a new destiny for herself."

Our culture is based upon Divine Love and religion. Religion has been the most vital force moulding our individual and collective life. It is so even to-day. Our land is specially fortunate to get the unerring guidance of successive sages and saints during all these centuries to keep us firm on our grounds wedded to the highest values of life, love, peace and harmony-From the birth of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa to this day, India has been blessed with Divine guidance. Sai Baba, the sage of Shirdi, has been pouring out his Divine Love to thousands and hundreds of thousands since 1845. The unending stream of devotees at Shirdi day in and day out is but a manifestation of Divine love, compassion and pity. Sai Baba did not believe in a religion which cannot feed the hungry, clothe the naked and shelter the homeless.

Swami Vivekananda taught that the only way God can come to a hungry man is in the form of a morsel of bread. The sage of Shirdi opened our eyes further and demonstrated in unmistakable terms that material improvement is a condition precedent for India's spiritual and moral advancement. One is the means and the other the end. There is no conflict between the two. Visit the sacred shrine of Lord Venkateswara and witness the hundreds of millions of people adoring and worshipping the Lord. There, we find, materialism in the service of spirituality. To heal the physical and mental sufferings of humanity, material prosperity and spirituality must work hand in hand; the deficiency of the one affects the progress of the other.

Religion will ever" remain the national passion in India, and the search for the meaning of life lies beyond the region of man's material desires and struggles. Modern man has been able to go round the moon in a few minutes. Nature is revealing its mysteries. Startling discoveries have been made and greater discoveries are in store for us. Civilization has advanced far. Barriers separating countries and nations have been destroyed. Man has conquered distance and the craze for further discoveries leads man to rtstless life. He feels a vacuum. There is an urge[1] to know tho soul, to know God, to pierce the mystery that veils nature. This constitutes the religious impulse in man. He faces the threefold questions :

(1) Who am I?

(2) Whence have I come

(3) What shall I do to return to my true homeland

"Each soul is potentially Divine. The goal is manifest, achieve this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this and be free- This is the “whole- of religion." Thus spoke Vivekananda,

To know who you are, spend some time every day in silerice, in meditation. Sit in a silent corner away from the din and roar of daily life and meditate on the adventure of existence, Ramana's message to humanity is to know ourselves. Reflect, recollect, concentrate, meditate.

The gates are opened. Haw to know God ? What is the easiest way to God? That was a question put to Mahatma Gandhi. What was the answer ? He said : " To me Seva, service of the poor, opens the easiest way to God." Let us contemplate |he way of Gandhi, the Father of the Nation. He says in one his books, " I would rather be torn to pieces than disown my brothers and sisters in suffering and pain." He identified himself with the poor and needy. Religion to Gandhi was not creed, but right life, a life of sympathy and love, of fellowship with the poor. Therefore, to know God, love is a pre-requisite. God is love itself. " The ignorant feel that God and love are separate- God and Love are One, and when once this is known they will realise that God is love." So said the great Tamil sage, ThiruvalluVar,

Service of the poor is worship of God. Mark the words of Rabindranath Tagore : " What does thou do in the dark corners of the temple, chanting the hymns and counting the beads ? Open Thine eyes, God is not before thee. He is there With the tiller of the soil and the stone cutter. So work and serve the ,poor. Work is worship. Meet thy God in the sweat of thy brow,"

So, duty forms an integral part of Our Sadhana, It is an act that is done not under obligation, bat as a sacrifice Out of intense love for the Lord and His creation. In discharging our duties we should not commit sinful acts and harm others. Do thy duty and leave the rest to God. Feel that you are an instrument in the hands of God. Get rid of' I.' Duty is selfless loving service and submission to the will of God,

" Blessed is he who works with love in his heart. His work is beautiful, is radiant, because it reveals love.

Does he grind the corn ? He does it in the aspiration that his beloved may bake the bread and bless it.

Does he build a hut ? He does it that his beloved may some day dwell in it aad make it beautiful with his presence,

Does he decorate his room with a picture of the beloved ? He does it that the beloved may bless the room with a breath of his spirit," So sang a saint.

To know God and the Atman, our Sastras have prescribed threefold margas. The Gnana Marga or the path of knowledge is very difficult. It is not easily accessible to all. All cannot acquire adequate knowledge of the infinite, the endless, the in' Comprehensible one. It is the privilege of a fare few.

The Karma Marga, the path of action, is within the reach of some. It is equally difficult, for to tread the path of action one must renounce all desires for fruits of action. Who can say that he has renounced desires for all fruits of action? Very few.

The Bhakti Marga is the easiest of all. Man is weak. Love, Bhakti, devotion is the secret, which can, with less difficulty, be seized by the average man of the age in which we live. Neither knowledge by itself nor Karma-action, but Bhakti, living faith or love can draw man the quickest to God. So Sai Baba's upadesh is

that we should sit before our Ishta Devata, whatever it may be, Baba, Rama, Krishna, Allah, Jesus, Siva, or Sakti and offer our prayers.

When we sit in meditation we enter into the presence of God. He meets us in the depths. We live on the surface. In the depths within us move Divine Presence. Each day, then, go into silence and sing the Divine Name and rejoice in the holy presence.

What is love? Love means to give all that thou hast to Him whom thou lovest so that nothing remains to thee of thine own. Conquer desire through the power of love. Love God for His own' sake not for any reward. Seek the giver, not the gift. Never forget that our goal is union with God. It is the deepest love that takes man to God. The lives of the 63 Nayanmars and the 12 Alwars are the beaconlights of this sublime love. Take the life of Kannappa Nayanar of Kalahasti. You and I visit temples and perform archanas. Thinnan, for that was the name of Kannappar, the son of a hunter king, got realisation in six days. The moment he saw Kudimbi Thevar, the Sivalingam at the top of the hills, he was moved, thrilled and he embraced the Sivalingam.

He could not bear the sight of the Lord staying exposed to the Sun and shower all alone. He feeds the Lord with pork roasted in the fire and tasted by him. God takes the food and when Siva Kochanar, the Thavamuni of Thapovanam, feels shocked at the sight of bones near God and gets worried, the Lord appears in his dream and asks him to witness the love of Kannappar next day.

When Kannappar saw one of the eyes of the Lord bleeding, he fell down, wept and tried all medicines. Finally, he removed his right eye and placed it in Lord's right eye socket. That was not enough to show the depth of Kannappan's love. So the Lord made his left eye bleed. What was the reaction ? Did Kannappar fail ? Certainly not. Placing his left foot on the Lord's bleeding eye, he was about to remove his left eye. Our Lord, the Love incarnate, could not bear the sight. Holding the hand of Kannappan, He said, 'stop Kannappa, stop Kannappa.' He blessed him to stand on His right side for ever. This is the Love

that every one should try to have. In six days by his loving service Kannappan had God-realisation.

Andal, Meera and a host of other devotees are the loud proclamations of the power of Bhakti. We can see God if we crave for it. Sai Baba repeatedly reminded us that we should cry to see God. It is this divine love that takes man to God realisation. It needs no knowledge ; all that is required is pure love from the depths of our hearts. Divine love pours out to all who love Divinity. Manifest your love by serving the poor. 'Whosoever serveth the least and the lowest they serve Me' are the words of Jesus.

Truth will triumph and Dharma will reign supreme in the world of today and tomorrow when matter and Spirit work in harmony and perfect unison.

Saint Sayings

The sacred places are the best for doling out charity.

'Greed leads to misery, scandal to sin, and bad luck to poverty»

God speaks to us in several ways, by day and by night, in silence or in sound. Over the whole earth are His mighty forces employed, and over the oceans are His ways observed.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked; whatever a soweth, that shall he also reap.

“He that loveth his life shall lose it; but he that loseth his life shall find it unto Life Eternal.

W. H. SWAMY KESAVAIAHJI’S SELECTIONS

Faith And Worship

IN the meshes of the materialism of the present times, religion fails to evoke any thought or attention. Religion, in its simple significance, is faith in Truth. It is mature and settled faith in Truth, realised and fundamental. Truth is but one of the several epithets of the Supreme One.

Faith is the state of mind towards the All Supreme. It is personal and.not always free from things worldly, while the Supreme is different. Faith is a matter of one's own heart, and the course of one's own conduct towards the outside Supreme, cherished as the ideal of the heart. It is the bowing of the heart and

dedication thereof to the Supreme. It is a devotional surrender for the protection and grace of the Lord.

There can be no certainty of one's feelings, or the bent of hearts. Knowledge or gnana, practice of Sadhana, may in a measure steady the mind and stabilise the heart. The Jnani has pitfalls to beware of. The Asuras were not without wisdom, leading to their undoing. Sri Sai seldom failed to impress this aspect; His comparison of the Jnani to a ' ramphal' is unerring in its import.

Sri Sai preferred Sadhanas involving faith and worship emphasising Bhakti as essential thereto. He advocated worship of several things - images, coins, pictures, padukas, etc. He has no mean place for the Guru, the giver of ' gnana' and the solidifier of faith. The Bhakta he would compare to a " Seethaphal".

The path to the goal is rugged and Sri Sai warns us that it is infested with hungry wolves, tigers, etc., and with yawning pits to negotiate, and stresses the need for a guide or Guru. In brief, obtaining ' gnana' is largely dependent upon our Guru.

To aspirants of gnana, mere acquisition of a Guru alone can never suffice. Lucky indeed must be he who finds the proper Guru at whose feet he is privileged to sit and learn. Hindus, before they start on any of their prayers, first invoke their Gurus to lead them aright. Subjugation of the mind and will, preparing one to be susceptible to the influence of the Guru, the faith in which approach to Him is made, the sincerity with which He is clung to, do seriously matter. In short, love, devotion and surrender are called for the procurement of the Guru's grace.

It may be that one's desires or expectations are not immediately fulfilled; or that failures and disappointments strongly tend to, and tempt the forsaking of the Guru. A real Bhakta is not daunted and his faith waxes, rather than wanes, come what may, happen what might.

Sri Sai often referred to his own Guru, and his part in the ennobling and elevation of manhood. He was conservative in matters of his faith, devotion, worship, etc. When Kavle Patil sought to abandon his old Gods and instal new

ones, Sri Sai not only disapproved of them, but also prevented it. In the matter of the Guru our immediate and living God, Sri Sai has this to tell us :

" Stick to your own Guru with unabated faith, whatever the merits of the other Gurus, and little of your own... We must not give up our attachment to our own Guru, but even more firmly rest in him, and him alone."

It is not what the Guru teaches, or chants into one's ears, that would matter. It is the contact with him, and the privilege to be with him, within the sphere of the influence of his presence, and contemplate in devotional love to him, these are what would lead to the Guru's grace. It is the very presence of the Guru, thrilling the heart, elevating the soul, that makes the Buddha, sadhu, etc. In his *Mahima* Sri Sai has this to say unto us : " For 12 years I waited upon my Guru. How can I describe his love, tome? I sat and gazed on Him, and we both were filled with bliss ... I cared not for anything else ... Night and day I pored on His face with an ardour of love that banished all thirst and hunger ... The Guru's absence even for a second made Me restless ... I meditated upon nothing but the Guru — My eye unceasingly fixed on Him, I wanted nothing from the Guru and He wanted nothing but love from Me. Apparently inactive, He never neglected Me and always protected Me with a glance. The Guru never blew any mantra into My ear. By His Grace I obtained My present state. Making the Guru the sole object of one's own thoughts and aims, one attains Paramartha, the supreme goal. This is the Truth the Guru taught Me. Four sadhanas and six sastras are not necessary. Trusting the Guru fully is enough."

Still further, Sri Sai would say : "I loved to gaze on Him, forgetting all but the Guru. My life was in My sight and My sight in Him. " Thus,in silence, heart full of love, in mute meditation, and gazeing and loving was Sri Sai elevated to the high pedestal He occupies. These words of Sri Sai reveal to man the intensity of the Bhakta's mind, and the ecstasies into which one is wafted. The Bhakta is safe in the heaven of the Guru-God.

So is the Supreme Lord always with his Bhaktas. Instances of these Bhaktas, groaning with desperation with the penalties of life , and rescued by their Gurus and Gods, are little needed to bear this out. The life stories of Kabir,

Ramdas, etc ring loud in every ear. How the Devas always got over the Daityas is not unknown or unappreciated. Nor can it be forgotten how Lord Sri Krishna went so far to forget Himself to save His beloved Partha.

Saint Sayings

Anger is a deadly enemy. It is an enemy possessed of an endless mouth. It is a sword Whose edge is extremely sharp. Whatever self-restraint and benevolence one may practice, all that is destroyed due to anger. Therefore, one should renounce anger.

"In the course of One's talk one should scrupulously speak truthful, agreeable, measured and wholesome words.

—One should always shun a raised seat and a high office.

If two or more persons are talking apart, one should not thrust Oneself into their presence without their consent,

H.H.Swami Kesavaiahjis Selections

The Mission Of Saints

THE mission of the saints and sages of India forms a glorious chapter in the spiritual history of our country. It is well known in Hindu religious lore that God incarnates Himself in the world whenever there is an ascendency of Adharma, for the protection of the virtuous and for the annihilation of the wicked. The mission of the saints is similar, though not identical. As Sri Ramakrishna observed, " divinity is for ever seeking you and knocking at your door."

One of the manifestations of divine grace is in the advent of saints who are truly messengers of God come into the world to carry Out a divine directive for the fulfilment of a divine purpose. The human situation with all its complexities is perpetually in need of such guidance and help. It was a saint, Ramdas, who energized Shivaji and helped him in his glorious victories. Behind the splendour of Asoka's rule lay his adherence to the tenets of Buddha. As in the case of kings and kingdoms, so with men and women. The saints, by their inherent goodness, make others who come in contact with them also good, for goodness is enchanting, as it is purity in essence. Further, saints, by attracting hordes of individuals set them on the path of righteousness.

The last decade or so witnessed a rapid spread of Sai Bhakti throughout our country so that there will be no one today who has not heard of Sai Baba as a shining example of a Jeevan Mukta, one who obtained liberation from earthly bondage while still continuing in human body. Divine powers came to Him as a natural result of the perfection He attained. These powers were used for the benefit of His innumerable devotees.

His birth and early life are shrouded in mystery. No one knows who His parents were or where He was born. He made His appearance for the first time as a boy of sixteen at Shirdi, a hamlet in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra State. Even then He seems to have attained God realization and possessed all the powers of a Siddha. For the succeeding half a century and more, though He lived amongst His devotees in Shirdi, He was still outside it. During this long period, Baba played a significant role in the alleviation of human distress, both mental and physical, and also set many on the path of spiritual advance. His way of drawing His devotees to himself and reforming them was unique-Knowing fully the limitations of human nature, He first attracted men by an initial grant of temporal benefits. But the ultimate objective was the spiritual regeneration of His people. In the main, the benefits conferred by Baoa served to check the spread of agnosticism or atheism and to develop faith in God.

Baba's main role was that of a Samartha Sadguru who diffused the spirit of religion and helped the good by removing the evil oppressing them and set the wicked on the path of goodness. Those who visited Him during His lifetime were struck by His marvellous knowledge of events far removed in time and space. His message to the world is in essence the old gospel of Vedanta. He actively discouraged mere discussion of pros and cons in matters relating to God, which, He said, transcend the limitations of human intellect and powers of reasoning. He commended the dictum that removal of Afhana is automatically the attainment of gnana, by which one may attain self-realisation. The guru's role is only to remove this veil so that -gnana may dawn on the disciples.

An important aspect of Sai Baba's mission is to make religion, a unifying force in society and help man attain the highest ethical levels. He constantly impressed

on His followers the fact that the essence of all religions is the same, and whoever is true to his own religion will ultimately attain God-realization. Baba's endeavours, more by practice than by precept that there is no real conflict between religions, met with tremendous success. During his lifetime, the Sri Ramanavami festival was celebrated alongside the Muslim celebration of the " Sandal procession ", in both of which Hindus and Muslims participated in complete agreement.

Baba, while living, fulfilled man's idea of God on earth. With His passing away, He seems to have assumed His infinite aspect, and is still actively helping His innumerable devotees, as is evident from their experiences. Saints like Him are immortal.

Om Shanthi ! Shanthi !! Shanthihi !!!

National Integrators

It is paradoxical that man, in his frantic efforts to attain happiness, succeeds Only in making his life miserable. This is because he seeks happiness through the body and senses with which he identifies himself and fails to realize the real self within, which is unchanging and eternal. The situation is worsened by the evil forces of selfishness, hatred and jealousy which often gain ascendancy. Such evils affect not only individuals but communities and nations as well

In this context, saints appear amidst us, from time to time and guide us, like good Gurus in the right direction with a view to our attaining perfection, free from ills and sorrows. One such saint is Sai Baba.

His blessings were freely given in generous measure to all who sought Him for the satisfaction of their temporal and spiritual needs. Throughout the period when He was bestowing these favours which took the form of securing employment for those unemployed, or granting issue to the issueless or curing a fell disease, He spoke as one seated in the heart of every One, and nothing was veiled from His vision. What is necessary is faith and patience, and abiding love for God which should show itself as unconditional surrender to, and reliance in, the Guru. He emphasized that the highest achievement of man is to know the

"Self" within him, which will secure for him liberation from all the miseries of existence. It is because of avidya or ignorance that one fails to recognize the " Self " which is really a spark of the divine. Instead, We are conscious of the " ego " which is the pseudo-self.

Baba never advocated conversion from one faith to another, but enjoined all to follow the religion of their birth. Nature has meant for us the religion most suited to us. So he advised a Muslim to be a true Muslim and a Hindu to follow his own religious path. By His own practices He set an example that there is nothing different between Islam and Hinduism in essence and enabled His devotees to look at the essence of all religions shorn of formalism and external observances.

He endeavoured and succeeded in unifying Hinduism within itself and Islam within itself. By purifying and refining both, He sought to establish a broad basis for a common religion for all humanity and helped to remove the meaningless hostilities between people in the name of religion. Baba endeavoured more by practice than by precept to show that there is no real conflict between religions. The incidental effects of such understanding between the two religionists were of great national importance in unifying conflicting groups which in recent years marred the social and political life of India.

Om Shanthi! Shanthi! ! Shanthihi!!!

Saint Sayings

"One should always depend on God. This will enhance one's fortitude, valour, sagacity, fearlessness, and spiritual stamina.

There is no glory like divine glory.

There is no penance higher than truthfulness.

'For a pious man the glory of a saint cannot be over estimated ; for, the glory of saints is infinite.

So long as your mind, your intellect, does not take to the thoughts of God, so long as your mind is not constantly devoted to the thought of the Lord, external aids are of no avail.

'He whose wants are never satisfied is never rid of his poverty, to whatever position he may outwardly attain, and so long as poverty is there he will ever feel miserable and wretched.

H. H. SWAMI KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

Restoring Dharma

Whenever there is a weakening of Dharma and there is an uprising of Adharma, I come self*created into the world ; for the protection of the righteous and the destruction of the Unrighteous, and for the establishment of Dharma I come into being in every age (Yuga) " declares Sri Krishna in the Gita. This is perhaps the most important *Vakya* of the Lord in the Gita.

When the virtues of Bhakti.Jnana and Vairagya are at a low ebb among mankind, God comes down to us in order to help us and to lead us along the path of Dharma. It is for the purpose of leading erring humanity along the path of righteousness that great saints and yogis have taken birth in our midst. Many grope in the darkness of ajnana and are unable to find their way out. Many plunge into the ocean of samsara and become victims to sorrow and suffering, and are unable to get out of it. It is to help such people and to lift them out of samsara that great sages and saints come to this world.

Saints like Gnanadev, Namdev, Tukaram, Eknath, Samartha Ramadas, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Vivekananda and Sai Baba came to us only to give us spiritual illumination and take us to the kingdom of Heaven. They have taught us the valuable lesson that our life in this earth should always be a striving after spiritual perfection, 'and that we should be like a drop of water on the lotus leaf in our attitude towards mundane life.

The saint made His sudden appearance at Shirdi under a Margosa tree while He was in His teens. Even at that early age Baba had developed extraordinary spiritual powers. He was not affected by heat or cold, wind or rain or by and of the dwandwas. He was almost always in a state of trance in the Nirvikalpa samadhi. The people of Shirdi wondered how a very young man of His age could possess such wonderful yogic powers. The saint then began to reside in an old dilapidated mosque at Shirdi.

Baba in His life worked many miracles and thus convinced many people of His greatness. His love for humanity knew no bounds. He had realised that God is love. He constantly preached that in order to reach the abode of God one should have real and sincere love and bhakti,

He was a great physician. He could give effective medicines for all sorts of diseases to which men are subject. After some time He stopped giving medicines. He gave only " udhi " from his dhuni which acted as a panacea for all ills (including diseases).

To those who went to him for spiritual illumination and for the cure of their physical sufferings He gave his nectar-like *uJtii* saying, "Allah bhale karega. " The sufferer did become all right very soon.

He made no distinction between man and man. To Him all were equal. The poor man was as much entitled to His love and attention as the rich man. The saint first satisfied the worldly desires of the people who went to Him in order to attract them to Himself. He then gradually purified the minds of His bhaktas and turned them slowly but surely towards spiritual desires. He thus made His devotees fit for realizing God and attaining .mukti. He very often said, " why should any one suffer when I am here ?."

About 1886, this great saint said to Mahalsapathy, one of His great devotees, "I am going to Allah now. I shall not return for three days. " Soon after, the physical body of the saint became a corpse with no life or animation. His devotees took care of the body for three days praying to the saint to return as promised. So at the end of three days the body began to show signs of life. Slowly the saint opened his lustrous eyes and beheld all around Him.

People belonging to different castes and creeds began to flock to Him in large numbers for spiritual advice. The saint had the same respect for all castes and creeds. He strongly advised His bhaktas not to forsake the Gods of their faith, but to worship them in all sincerity and devotion. He preached that the goal of all the religions was one and the same, namely the attainment of mukti. He was not a believer in proselytism. In fact, He discouraged conversion from one faith to

another. He was a great advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity and worked with might and main for the realization of this great ideal.

The Hindus worshipped the saint in accordance with their sastraic modes, using mantras in the worship. The saint had a deep knowledge of the Hindu scriptures as well as of the Koran, the scripture of the Mohammedans. He often expounded the tenets of these religions in a wonderful way to His devotees. He often gave money to poor Mohammedan pilgrims for pilgrimage to Mecca. The holy name of Allah was always on the lips of Sai Baba. He gave his pictures and padukas to his Hindu devotees and asked them to worship them. He exhorted the Mohammedans, to perform their Namaz regularly and without fail. He deprecated strongly the idea of a man praising his own religion and belittling the religion of another.

The saint distributed among His devotees sweetmeatj and other edibles brought by anyone as prasad. The Rama Navami and Panja Sandal festivals were celebrated by Baba on a grand scale with the help of His bhaktas of all castes and creeds. In fact, His noble life was a telling example of Hindu-Muslim unity. Even to-day Hindus and Muslims offer worship at the Samadhi of Baba and other holy places connected with the saint without any hitch or hatred or misunderstanding.

The saint sincerely worked for the spiritual benefit of mankind for about 30 years, healing the sores of suffering humanity by the extraordinary power of his spiritual attainments and shuffled off his mortal coil on October 15, 1918.

But is Baba really dead ? No. From His samadhi He hears our prayers and supplications and grants them with a generous heart. It is this generosity of Baba that is responsible for the unqualified success of the Baba Mission. The saint is as alive to-day with His body in His samadhi, as He was while in flesh and blood. He inclines His ears unto our prayers to-day from His samadhi as vigilantly as He did while He was in our midst in His physical body.

The main principles of His teaching are these :

1. Always speak truth.
2. Give alms to the poor and needy as much as you can.

3. Do not speak ill of others.
4. Do not be jealous of the wealth and prosperity of another.
5. Always work hard. Do not be lazy or indolent.
6. Do not treat the poor with contempt.
7. Be content with what God has given you. *e*-
8. Always contemplate. God and have His holy flame on your lips.

It is Sai Baba who has proclaimed in unequivocal terms from the hilltop of His spiritual eminence, " Why do you fear when lam here? Cast all your burdens on Me, I Will bear them." Surely, spiritual history cannot boast of a greater or nobler declaration than the one made by the Saint of Shirdi. This great declaration is the sheet-anchor of every devotee's hope of attaining mukti.

From the foregoing it is clear that sages and saints come to this World when mankind strays from the path of rectitude and righteousness, when in consequence sins are on the increase and when adharma rears its ugly head. Their mission is to put down such adharma and establish the reign of dharma, Q

Saint Sayings

A short life is preferable if devoted to the remembrance of God. A life of one lakh years (withou devotion of God) is of no use at all.

.'Truth is as impossible to be soiled by any outward touch as the sunbeam.

''Truth is like light and falsehood is like darkness; Only those creatures who are fallen and degraded can' enjoy darkness and falsehood.

If you do good and surrender it to God, good will come to you. God is the Lord of them that do good.

H. H, SW'A.W KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

Torch-bearers

From time immemorial, suffering world turned to the East for wisdom. India embodies all that is good and great in the East. India has been sending out to the world, waves after waves of spiritual influence. The inexhaustible source of power behind these periodical messages of truth is derived from the great rishis, the sages of India, who are still living in our midst, invisible and yet exerting their influence over us.

Sankaracharya was an intellectual giant without a compeer. Like a great conqueror he hacked to pieces mercilessly all the superstitions in the religion of his day. He showed to the world the pristine purity, the divine splendour and the eternal greatness of Vedanta. Then came the compassionate Ramanuja. His heart was great which embraced all, including the downtrodden, the outcaste, and the lowly. He purified forms of worship and opened the door to the highest spiritual worship from the Brahmin to the Pariah. That was Ramanuja's work.

In recent years, another sage lived in Bengal. Though he was bombs' an illiterate Brahmin, he had the intellect of Sankara and the heart of Ramanuja. He was Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He preached the universal religion which knows no barriers of race, colour, caste, creed or country. His message has spread to the four corners of the world.

The latest among his galaxy of the great is another saint who lived in an obscure village near Poona. He was Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi. He was also illiterate, but in His life of unsurpassed purity He proclaimed to the world the supremacy of God, the efficacy of implicit faith and endurance tempered by charity, tolerance towards followers of other religions, a welcome blessing in these days of unrest.

Thus, the spiritual lineage of the rishis is continuing in this land. India is their land. They will make this ancient country not only Punya Bhoomi, but also Karma Bhoomi in order to bear the torch of spiritual wisdom to dispel darkness in the world outside.

Sage Narada and Maya

MAYA is unknowable. Once Narada besought the Lord of the universe, " Lord, show me that Maya of Thine which can make the impossible possible." The Lord nodded assent. Subsequently the Lord one day set out on travel with Narada. After going some distance, He felt very thirsty and fatigued. So, He sat down and told Narada, " Narada, I feel much thirsty ; please get me a little water from somewhere." Narada at once ran in search of water.

Finding no water nearby, he went far from the place and saw a river at a great distance. When he approached the river, he saw a most charming young lady sitting there, and was at once captivated by her beauty. As soon as Narada went near her, she began to address him in sweet words, and ere long, both fell in love with each other. Narada then married her, and settled down as a house - holder. In course of time he had a number of children by her.

While he was thus living happily with his Wife and children, there came a pestilence in the country. Death began to collect its toll from every place. Then Narada proposed to abandon the place and go away somewhere else. His wife acceded to it, and they both came out of their house leading their children by hand. But no sooner did they come to the bridge to cross the river than there came a terrible flood, and in the rush of water all their Children were swept away one after another, and at last the wife too was drowned. Overwhelmed with grief, Narada sat down on the bank and began to weep piteously. Just then the Lord appeared before him, saying, " O Narada, where is the water ? And why are you weeping ?" The sight of the Lord startled the sage, and then he understood everything. He exclaimed, " Lord, my obeisance to Thee, and my obeisance also to Thy wonderful Maya."

Everybody should try to escape from the baneful Maya by being devoted to the Lord at all times.

Efficacy Of Prayer

Thou art the father of the world, of the moving and non moving greater than the greatest. Thou art the one object of worship. There is none equal to

Thee in all the worlds. Who, then, can excel Thee, O^ Thee of incomparable power ?" ; *Gita XI* 43

“Pray to God morning and evening, and spend the day in thy pursuits.'* *Prophet Muhammad*

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Jesus Christ

In Kaliyuga all the great teachers have prescribed constant to company of holy men and prayer as the means by which Ordinary -mortals can escape from the entanglements of the world. The company of holy men creates in us a yearning for God. Without this intense desire nothing can be achieved.

Prayer is the communion of the soul with God. It is a longing Of the soul for things eternal and divine. It is a confession of the weakness of man striving for great perfection. It is at the same time a sign of the helplessness of man who is only an instrument in the hands of God. If God is the driver, man is the chariot, which moves wither so ever the driver wants it to move. Generally prayer is degraded to the low level of a commercial transaction and base materialism such as requesting God to make us rich, give us more profits or promotion in service. This is not prayer, but gross selfishness born out of ignorance.

True prayer always indicates firm faith in the presence of God, either personal or impersonal, within, or without, with form or without form. Faith is the foundation, as it were, on which spiritual life rests, A devotee who is assailed by doubts at every stage makes no progress. Faith guides us through the most difficult paths. Service to our fellow-beings is the best way to achieve faith and God Himself seeks His seat in the heart of one Who serves his fellowmen. A prayerful heart is the vehicle for the soul and service to humanity makes the heart prayerful.

Real prayer is the complete offering of one's body, heart, mind and soul to God. Here recitation with lips when the heart, and the soul are not attuned is not prayer, but an empty pretension prayer offered thus in unison purifies the person, it removes all evils in us such as lust, anger, greed, etc., and establishes mutual toleration and goodwill. There are moments when we are

assailed by doubts, disappointments and darkness. We must cultivate unlimited patience and courage to withstand such moments of depression. A man of prayer knows no retreat or defeat.

Prayer is request to God in a humble and reverent attitude. It is the yearning of the heart to be one with its maker. It is the mental attitude that is important and not the words uttered. The various exercises are intended to humble us to enable us to realise that nothing happens without His will, and we are but clay in the hands of the Divine potter. Duration of the prayer varies from man to man according to the stage of his spiritual development. Prayer should certainly be in one's own language. Silent prayer is often more effective than loud recitation. The prayer of a pure heart never goes unanswered.

It is a good plan to begin the day with prayer so that Divine grace may guide us throughout the day. Similarly the day should be closed with prayer so that we can have a peaceful night free from ugly dreams and nightmares.

Too much of rational explanation is the bane of modern civilisation. We must begin with childlike simplicity and have implicit faith in God.

If I exist, God exists. Once we have faith in the existence of God, then arises the necessity of prayer. There are only two aids to those who are faltering in their steps in the path of God realisation. One is constant endeavour and the other is prayer.

To one with a prayerful attitude there is no idleness. When we are not actively engaged in work you can seek union with the divine in prayer. It purifies and strengthens us. Heartfelt prayer steadies one's nerves, humbles one and clearly shows one the next step. Such is the efficacy of prayer.

Kingdom Of Heaven

MAN is in essence a spark of the divine power. But he manifests himself in lower worlds. His physical body is like an animal. His mind makes him human and his spirit which is the spark of God makes him divine. The summum bonum of human existence is to seek the kingdom of Heaven within. Man is essentially a spiritual being, his self being an emanation from the Universal Self, God. So to know himself, his deepest self, is to know God. He can sink in

consciousness into the depths of his own being beyond the body, the passions, the emotions, the mind, the reason ; these are all his, but they are not he, he can pass beyond them all and fealise himself as separate from them, the pure 'I*. Then the recognition dawns that the universal spirit into which the self opens, transcends all the beings in which it is manifested and is alike in all.

The paths leading to this self-realization are many. One of the paths is through prayer. It is of threefold forms—physical, verbal and mental. The first consists of rituals and ceremonials, in modern life, due to stress of activity, lack of leisure and other inconveniences, this form of prayer has almost fallen out of use in the life of the individual. In view of this tendency of the age, great emphasis was laid on verbal and mental prayer which is meditation, i.e., sequential thinking directed towards an inspiring and interesting object—an Ishta Devata, no matter what the deity is. As Mr. C. Rajagopalachari said, it is true bhakti that counts, and it does not matter what deity we worship.

In all our puranas great emphasis is laid on verbal prayer because it is easier to practise than the other two. "The seekef iafter truth," says Manu, " reaches the highest goal only by japa." And japa, declares the Mahabharata, is said to be the best of all spiritual practices in modern age. The Vishnu Purana supports this view wholeheartedly when it observes, "That which one obtained through meditation in the Satya Yuga (the Golden age), through sacrifice in the Treta Yuga (Silver Age) and through worship in the Dwapara Yuga (Bronze Age) may be achieved ift the Kali Yuga (Iron Age) by reciting the names of the Lord,"

In the modern age the physical body and the mind of man are highly developed. The divinity in man is dormant. As has been already stated, man has a mind, but mind is not man. But the tragedy of the present day is that man thinks that he is the mind. Mind is a good servant, but a bad master. We are living in an age of the mind, of intellect which is trying to assert its supermacy over man. Look at the incalculable harm the mind has done in releasing the forces of atomic energy, for the destruction of human culture, civilization and, in short, for the destruction of man himself. Can there be anything more suicidal than this ?

The reason is not far to seek. The gulf between the human mind and the divinity within him has not been spanned. The mind is estranged from the divinity latent in man. How to link the mind of man with his divinity? Prayer is the bridge that connects the human with the divine. This prayer has to be practised daily, hourly and, in fact, every moment of your waking consciousness in order to strengthen it, so that the divinity in man may be awakened. When the diabolic pleasure of the human mind in releasing destructive forces can be sublimated into the angelic influences sending forth comfort and peace, happiness and health to all mankind will result.

A suffering world is calling to us. Within us is the power to heal waiting to be discovered and released through prayer. Shall we, then, not find time to pray and to turn inwards and seek the God within so that we may reveal Him to others and so that spiritual life may become a living reality to us and to them? As Rajaji said, the quality of love, kindness and mercy are the attributes of God. If we imbibe and manifest these qualities in our daily life, we could say that we have truly offered prayer to God. In fine, as Swami Vivekananda said, " Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, prayer or worship or psychic control or philosophy by one or more or all of these—and be free. This, is the whole of religion." Thus prayer leads to the Kingdom of Heaven within us and let us begin it now.

Om Shanthi ! Shanthi ! ! Shanthihi !!!

Sankirtan Of The Lord

Lord Sri Krishna said to Arjuna : " Know this as a truth that the devotee who, while chanting My name dances in joy, taking Me to be present before him, really purchases Me." He also said, " The devotee whose voice gets choked with emotion, whose heart melts with divine love, who now weeps, now laughs, now dances without any reserve and sings My name and glory at the top of his voice—no wonder that such a true devotee is rid of all his worldliness and impurities accumulated in thousands of previous births ; nay, he sanctifies the entire world by his very sight and his words become nectar-like." We cannot find words to describe the glory and the efficacy of the Divine Name.

When the Dwapara Yuga came to an end, Maharishi Narada called on Brahma and after offering salutations to Him asked him, " O Grandsire ! Kindly tell me how the ocean of Maya is to be crossed during this terrible age of Kali." The Grandsire comforted the sage and told him that during the Kali Yuga one could very easily obtain emancipation and divine bliss (Moksha) through the mere utterance of the Divine Name of Bhagavan Narayana, full of faith and devotion. Out of sheer compassion for the devotees seeking release from bondage, Hiranyagarbha (Brahma) initiated the following Mahamantra at the request of Sage Narada:

" Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare !

" Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare."

In this Mahamantra are found three Names of God—Hari Rama and Krishna. Hari means one who steals the hearts of the Yogis or he who destroys sins when remembered by even those of a wicked mind. Rama means He in whom the Yogis lake delight or the Para Brahman, the eternal bliss. Krishna means one who powerfully attracts or draws the minds of the Yogis or one who washes offer scraps away all the impurities in the mind of the Yogis once they turn to Him. Chanting this Mahamantra containing these sixteen names with devotion tears off the veil of Maya of the Jiva consisting of sixteen folds, and supreme Bliss is immediately realised.

The modern age is suffering from the fell disease, egoism and possessiveness (Ahankara and Mamakara). It is not only the age of the aeroplane, radio and television but also of the A and H bombs. Humanity is farther and farther away at present from the ideals of spirituality set up in our ancient scriptures. It is truly declared by realised souls that in this confused state there is greater inclination towards material progress than spiritual progress. The majority of people fail to realise that the true joy of life and the splendour and glory of living lie in the innermost recesses of man. There ate silent depths in the ocean which the fiercest storm cannot reach. Likewise, there are silent holy depths in the cave of the heart which the storms of passion, greed, hatred, anger and sin cannot disturb.

The delights of the flesh, the thrills born of the sensuous excitement of animal spirits, the great pleasures derived from intellectual acrobatics and aesthetic experiences pale into insignificance and worthlessness before the enjoyment of self-knowledge, and self-realization. When we look around the world today, we find it steeped in ignorance of the ultimate values of life, full of sorrow and suffering. Poverty, misery, disease, ignorance, greed, anger, lust, jealousy and hatred surround mankind on all sides with the result that ordinary men are plunged in personal, racial, social and economic strife's, little realising that there is a higher object to be attained which will dispel all the misery and pain and fill the soul with everlasting happiness and peace, that all our maladies are only the outcome of ignorance and that once the veil of Maya is lifted and our delusion cleared by the light of wisdom, the supreme happiness and peace that dwell in that haven of bliss become^ ours.

Saint Saying

We should watch our thoughts. If we hold kind thoughts, we do kind acts. If we feel envy, jealousy, malice, it is shown in our lives, for it brings discontent and unhappiness.

Nine Ways Of Salvation

THE purpose for which we have taken a human body with all the faculties is only to know the Innermost self which is identical with the Paramatma (Supreme Being). So, our endeavour should be to search within and cleanse our heart of all impurities arising out of Raga and Dwesha and fill it with the divine nectar of devotion to the Lord. Though there are several paths to attain emancipation, the easiest and the one declared by Brahma and great saints as suitable to this age of Kali is the Bhakti Maiga. Bhakti is to adore God with body, mind and word. If we develop intense devotion of God (Para Bhakti), we can quickly attain His Lotus feet.

Nava Vidha Bhakti or nine types of devotion, has been described in our spiritual treatises. They are Sravana (hearing the glory of God), Kirtana (singing His glory), Smarana (remembering Him always), Padasevana (falling at His Holy feet in Sarana-gati), Archana (worship with mantras, flower, fruit, milk, water etc.), (Service to God and His creation), and Atma Nivedhana (dedication of Self and everything to God in sacrifice as Iswarar-pana). Sri Sai Baba stressed the need for every aspirant cultivating these nine forms of bhakti for attaining peace and freedom from bondage (Samsara).

Sravana is the easiest for any devotee who has an ear for divine Bhajan and discourses (Sat Sang) on the lilas or glories of the Lord. We shall discuss Smarana and Kirtana in this article to see how best they can be practised while discharging one's duty.

Smarana is " remembrance " of God. The Divine Name is undoubtedly a great fire which will burn the huge slock of one's sins accumulated in a series of births like a pile of hay. So if one can remember the Nama always wherever one may be, in whatever work one may be employed, in prosperity and in adversity, in joy and sorrow, day and night, in Jagratha, Swapna and Sushupti Avastas (wakefulness, dream and sound sleep), then one can surely attain the Lord. There is no doubt about this.

The Lord has described such exclusive remembrance and its effect in the following verses of the " Gita" which should be committed to memory by every aspirant:

"OPartha, I am easily attainable by that steadfast Yogi who constantly remembers Me daily, not thinking of any other thing (with single minded devotion).

" Having attained me, these Mahatmas or great souls do not again take birth which is the source of pain and is non-eternal, they having reached the highest perfection (Moksha)." The remembrance! should be constant and not casual, the Lord has stressed.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa said, " Chant the name of Hari, morning and evening, keeping time all the while by clapping your hands; all your sins and afflictions will then leave you. If you clap your hands standing under a tree, the birds sitting on it will fly away; so, if you chant the name of Hari clapping your hands at the same time the birds of evil thoughts Will fly away from the tree of your body, " The Holy Mother, Sri Saradaraani Devi, said; " The Divine Name (Mantra) purifies the body. Man becomes pure by repeating the Name of God. As the wind removes the cloud, so the name of God destroys the cloud of worldliness."

The great saint, Kabir, beautifully describes this in the following memorable words : " Remember God just as a lover remembers his lady-love always, remember Him as the cow always, even while grazing in a far off forest, thinks of its calf; recollect God as a pauper "who thinks of the few annas he has saved and which he counts often and often ; merge all your thoughts on God just as the deer is completely absorbed in the music of the Veena; develop deep attachment for Him similar to that of the moth for the flame (the moth does not hesitate to hug the fire even though it is burnt) ; concentrate all your thoughts on God even as the insect is absorbed in the bee and, lastly, have that intense devotion and love towards God just as the fish has for water which is its life itself and separation from which it cannot brook even for a moment,"

If every one were to follow this valuable advice and remember God every moment everywhere ceaselessly, even when going through the daily duties, performing them sincerely as sacrifice to God, without any hope of reward, without expectation of praise and without any fear or favour and spend all the leisure in meditation without wasting even one minute in idle talk or gossip, this world can become, in reality, Vaikunta and through the grace of Hari all of us can attain eternal peace sooner or later according to the intensity of devotion developed by each. In this, there is no loss of effort,

Saint Sayings

The noblest Vengeance is to forgive

By three methods we learn wisdom; first by reflection which is the noblest; second, by imitation which is the easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest.

Disease is the tax which the soul pays for the use of the body as the tenant pays house rent for the use of the body

Eat to your satisfaction in the day but let your meal at night be light and small in quantity.

Happiness is contagious. One cannot be happy Without expressing it towards one's neighbour and to all the world. Let us seek to give happiness to others and we shall get it ourselves.

To get good is animal, to do good is human, to be good is divine.

H. H. SWAMI KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

Divine Music

EVEN a little effort sincerely and honestly made bears immense fruit and if a person constantly remembers the All-Merciful God and chants His Divya Nama or Mahamantra, surely he attains supreme bliss. There is no doubt about it. But taste for the Divine Name grows as a result pf supreme religious merit in previous births as well as in this birth also, out of Divine Grace. So it will be necessary to lead a pure life and to cleanse our hearts and minds of every impurity first. We must eschew without reserve lust, anger and greed

Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in knowledge of Yoga, alms-giving, control of the senses, sacrifice, study of the sacred scriptures with reverence, humility, austerity, staight-forwardness, harmlessness absence of anger, renunciation, peacefulness, truthfulness, absence of crookedness, compassion to all beings, uncovetousness, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickle-mindedness, vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, scrupulous cleanliness, absence of hatred and absence of pride are the characteristics belonging to one born for a divine state.

Hypocrisy, arrogance, self-conceit, anger, lust, harshness, ignorance, impurity, untruthful conduct, atheism, pride, delusion, immeasurable cares and expectations, gloating over one's vicious achievements and ill-gotten wealth, harmful and deceitful nature, stubbornness, disregard of scriptural ordinances, haughtiness,' egoism, boasting of one's powers and malice are the characteristics of those belonging to demoniacal nature.

Divine nature is deemed for liberation and the demoniacal for bondage. The former leads to supreme happiness and bliss, and the latter to ignominy and the foulest hell. The Lord's Nama alone will save us from hell and the chain of births and rebirths. So every one should strive sincerely to follow the divine path and attain salvation in this very birth.

The great Kunti Matha prayed, " O Krishria! It is in sorrow and suffering we remember Thee. Therefore throw me in the whirlpool of misery over and over again so that I may not forget Thee." .. *'this* shows the divine state which is fitted for immortality.

Krishna is singing of God's Nama and glories either singly or in Chorus, where a number of devotees join together for self-purification and for getting the Lord's mercy or kripa. When people who have reliance in the Lord's Words find themselves overwhelmed by difficulties and When there is no hope' of rescue, they call for His help in extreme distress and help comes forthwith. This also is kirtan for redemption from imminent peril (Bhaya), the Lord being 'Bhaya Nashana.'

The music of Sages Narada and Thumburu and the chorus bhajan of Sri Gauranga and Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu come under the former category and the appeal to the Lord for help of Draupadi and Gajendra under the latter. The memorable prayer of Draupadi and her kirtan when her saree was pulled away with violence in the royal assembly by that villain Dhuchasana is most thrilling. She cried, " O Dweller of Dwaraka ! O Krishna! Lord of the Gopis ! See how I am insulted and ill-treated by these Kauravas. O Lord of Lakshmi! Lord of Vraja! Lord Janardana, allayer of suffering ! Deliver me from the ocean of misery into which these Kauravas have plunged me. O Krishna ! Preserver and Protector ! O Maha Yogi! I seek Thy protection against the tyranny of the wretched Kauravas. Pray, save me and protect my honour. O Govinda! I fall at your feet in Saranagati. There is noae to save me expect Thyself."

What happened ? That Ocean of Mercy, Lord Sri Krishna, at once entered into the composition of Draupadr's garment and the more that wicked Dhuchasana pulled it, the more the cloth extended and there was a huge pile of divine and beautiful garment all the while. Such is the efficacy of chanting and singing the Divine Nama and His glories,

Victory and mangalam be to Lord Sri Krishna and His sacred Nama! The story of Gajaraja is another instance of the Lord's overflowing mercy even to animals who can neither chant mantras nor sing like human beings. Owing to supreme merit acquired in previous births the lord of elephants cried and appealed to the Lord of watchers, Sriman Narayana and help came at once.

As regards singing in chorus by several devotees, this form of kirtana flourishes in Brindavan, Ayodhya, Pandarpur and Shirdi even today. When Sri Sai Baba was alive, his devotees used to sing in ecstasy, forgetting themselves and in complete self-surrender to that great Saviour and Healer of broken hearts.

The divine music and kirtan instil Para Bhakti not only in those singing them but also in those hearing them. The Lord of the kirtana is bodily present where so much of Divine Love is manifested. The Lord has said :

" I dwell not in Vaikunta or in the heart of Yogis ; I stay wherever My devotees assemble and sing My glory and Nama in ecstasy/'

Blessed is the devotee who gets a thrill and whose voice gets choked and his eyes filled with tears of joy as he hears, remembers or sings the Divine Name. Glory to Lord Sri Narayana. May Sri Sai Baba bless us all to have remembrance of the Divine Name always and sing His glories without reserve at all times.

Om Shanthi! Shanthi!! Shanthihi!!!

Saint Sayings

Unhappiness comes from the-wrong view points, from worry, dissipation of energy, fear of the future regret for the past. Stop all this mental agitation and unhappiness ceases.

Very often we place false value upon ourselves and think we are great, good and all that. God above is great and good.

To suffer for the sake of truth or God, it is a glorious human privilege. Such suffering brings you nearer to Him.

H. H. SWAMI KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

How To Overcome Maya

WHY does not man's mind dwell on God ? More powerful than God is His Mahamaya, His power of Illusion. God has covered us all with his maya. He is near, still it is not possible for us to see Him or know His ways.

Once Narada besought the Lord of the Universe : " Lord, show me that maya of Thine, which can make the impossible possible." The Lord nodded assent. Sometime later, so the Puranic story goas, the Lord went out with Narada. After covering some distance, he felt thirsty. Narada went away in quest of water.

Finding no water nearby, he proceeded far from the place and saw a river at a great distance. He beheld sitting on the river bank a most charming young lady. He was captivated by her beauty. She began to address him in sweet words and ere long, he fell in love with her. He then married her and settled down as a house-holder.

In due course, he had a number of children by her. He was thus living with his wife and children happily for sometime. Soon a pestilence came to the

country, death began to take its toll from every home. Narada proposed to leave the place and go to a safe place. His wife agreed. They left their home, leading their children by hand. But, no sooner had they come to the bridge to cross the river than came a terrible flood and in the rush of water all his children were swept away, one after another. His wife too was drowned.

Overwhelmed with grief Narada sat down on the river bank and began to weep piteously. Just then, the Lord appeared and said, " Narada, where is the water ? Why are you weeping? "The sight of the Lord startled the sage. He soon realised everything.

He exclaimed, " Lord, my obeisance to Thee, and my obeisance to Thy wonderful maya." So, everyone is under the spell of this world bewitching maya. This maya is like a cloud. The sun cannot be seen on account of this screen of the cloud. When the clouds disappear, one sees the sun. If by the grace of the Guru one's ego vanishes, then one sees God.

"Fallen From Status"

IN a materialistic age such as ours, we are inclined to believe in the ultimate reality of the objective world around us and forget that happiness derived from our actions in the world is ephemeral. As pointed out in our sacred books, what gives lasting happiness is God-realization.

The attainment of this state involves passing through a number of stages which constitute true progress in life. A learned commentator on the Gita " has said that as in nature all progress is from the lower to higher forms of life so also with man true progess is from the lower level to the higher values of life. Although the "Gita" says that man, before he attains God- -realization, should follow his normal avocation, he should not get lost in the pursuits and preoccupations of worldly life A realization that the body and its appurtenances are the creation of maya would enable him not to be too passionately attached to them.

Such a man is less affected by the miseries of life, for he knows that such are the inevitable concomitants of worldly pleasures. Another useful reminder is the transistorizes of everything pertaining to this world. It may, therefore, behove

a wise man to avoid the miseries of existence by renouncing all desires. But such renunciation is impossible to most. What one may attempt is not have too much dependence on sense satisfactions, which are bound to fade away.

In this connection it is well to recall the words of the Lord hat whatever is cognised by the mind, speech, eyes, ears and the rest, know ,t all to be a figment of the mind, a phantasmagoria and doomed to pass away." An illustration of the above may be found m the story as given in Lord Krishna's last message which relates to a loving pair of pigeons which were deeply attached to each other. They found immense happiness in bringning up their progeny till one day they lost their young young ones in a trap set by a hunter. Not able to bear the Pangs of separation, the parent birds one after the other walked deliberately into a trap as an escape from the grief and misery which overtook them. What added poignancy to their sorrow was the suddenness of its appearance in the midst of what appeared to be unalloyed happiness.

The lesson which the parent pigeons learnt at such cost to themselves is one applicable to every one of us. If only the pigeons had not attached such dependence on the happiness they derived from their loving attachment to each other, the unbearable grief they suffered might have been mitigated at least to some extent. The realization that all joys are by their very nature transient and that sorrows are inseparable from pleasures, would help one to take a more sober view of life and everything associated with it. Therefore, it is said that " he who, attaining human birth which is like an open gateway to liberation, is attached like the bird to family concerns merely, is considered as one who has fallen from his status."

Saint Sayings

God's grace is never for him who is indolent and negligent. God's grace is for him who is persevering and industrious.

Weakness is felt only when God is forgotten. And the simple way to remember Him is to take His name constantly.

A miracle can be a moment's wonder. A change according to the Divine law can alone endure.

Always when one faces difficulties and overcomes them it brings a new spiritual feeling of victory.

It is by their own actions good or bad that men are happy or miserable. The virtues or vices of others will not affect us in the least.

H. H. SWAMY KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

WORSHIP OF THRUTH

THE substratum of all the great religions of the world is truth and so all of them exalt truth. Jesus Christ declared before the world, " And ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free." Lord Buddha, the perfect flower of humanity, declared in India, "Happy is he who has found the Truth... There is no saviour in the world except the Truth." Hinduism proclaims, " Satyam nasthi parodharmah," There is no religion higher than truth.

Thus all the great religions are agreed on the indestructibility and the immanence of truth. An eminent scientist, Ernest Haeckeal, writes : " Every effort of genuine science makes for a knowledge of Truth." Scientific thinkers say, "Knowledge of Truth is the ideal of life." They want to know the ultimate cause, the reality of the source. Thus truth is the common frontier between religion and science.

Each religion proclaims its own particular values as truth. But these are only sectarian ideas. Some say that Jesus the Christ "was the only begotten Son of God and that he came to this world to save mankind. They say this is the truth and we must believe in it. Similarly others say, " Truth is Buddha, his life, and teachings are the standard of Truth."

There are many ways of worshipping Eternal Truth. Each religion prescribes a method of worshipping Truth and asks its votaries to denounce all other forms of worship. So the followers of the various religions see perfect Truth in the life and teachings of their prophet or messenger or avatar and worship such a person as Jehovah, Father in Heaven, Christ, Buddha, or Krishna, Allah or Brahman. As rivers rising from different mountains all flow into one ocean, so all forms of worship rising from different points of view run into one Absolute Eternal Ocean of Truth,

Mukti By Meditation

ONE of the great needs of the present times is a regular system of meditative thought and spiritual self-training for all men. The practice of meditation is a way of release from the troubles, sorrows and difficulties of life. That release is the one thing which all men must see. If it is to be complete and lasting, the release must at least be threefold:

(1) The release must be of or through out own inner powers, those diverse qualities which we have developed in the hundreds of lives which lie behind us. Those aspiring for spiritual life must not wait for stress of outer circumstances to call forth that innate power. They must learn to release and employ it deliberately. Meditation is the way to achieve that release.

(2) Release of the force of our own inherent divinity. As long as our attention is turned outwards to the external, the temporary and the fleeting, the God within us will remain asleep. It is within our power consciously to awaken and to release our divine potentialities here and now. There is incalculable energy behind every one of us. The real goal of meditation is the discovery of, and union with, the source of power.

(3) Release from the sorrows and difficulties of life, from the unsatisfactory nature of human existence, consisting as it does of much pain that seems to last and of little happiness which seems so fleeting. We search for bliss which is eternal and serenity which is unshakeable. We seek eternal liberation. We must learn quickly the lessons that pain and sorrow teach and turn inwards away from them into the heart of reality. We must withdraw from all our troubles until we see them in their right perspective as ephemeral shadows cast by our personalties upon the screen of time and space. We must turn our faces away from the many shadows towards One Light. Meditation is the way by which this great " conversion " may be achieved.

We must think our way inwards to the very centre of our being. There we shall find the light eternal shining, there we shall find the place which is unshakeable and which passeth understanding.

The Ulumate Reality

AMONG living beings it is man who has been endowed with reason and intellect. Though man's behaviour and actions are dictated to a very large extent by his instincts and emotions, still intellect and reason play a very "prominent and determining part. These faculties have been utilised by man for the quest of the eternal truth or the ultimate reality.

From time immemorial man has been confronted with the problem, "Whence have I come? What is the cause? Why do I live ? Where is our final rest? " The answer to these questions has led him in quest of truth.

Prophets and seers have made utterances to convey their views of eternal truth. Jesus Christ, two thousand years ago, stated: " And he shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Lord Buddha, much earlier, stated: " Happy is he who has found the truth." The founders of great religions have made similar statements.

The interpretations of the sayings of the prophets, by their followers, disciples and annotations at a subsequent stage have given rise to different kinds of religions, various systems of philosophical thought, dogmas, doctrines, and theories. The sayings and utterances of the prophets and the sages have lost their original universal meaning in the conglomeration of dogmas and theories and various religions, sects and sub-sects arose, to support each interpretation. These different systems of philosophical thought and religion have swayed the actions of men, races and nations, and in the name of religion war, murder, and arson have been perpetrated. If only man has stopped to think over ultimate truth, which is universal and all-embracing, and realised that all philosophies, sciences and religions are but attempts of the human mind to know ultimate reality and realise the truth, much of this chaos and confusion could have been avoided.

Every science makes for knowledge of truth and the scientists applying the standard of reason, intellect and perception have tried to unravel the mysteries of nature.

They have advanced so far as to realise that the fundamental particles of the universe are the same and it is a particular kind of grouping that makes a particular substance, - and advanced scientists have envisaged the possibility of one substance being converted into another. Some have gone still further and postulated that there is really no difference between energy and matter, as is evidenced by atomic energy, which is produced by the atom being broken up. This energy is however, at present being utilised for the construction of the atomic bomb. Scientists have, therefore come to the conclusion that the universe with all its variety of phenomena has come out of this eternal substance.

By the very same process of reasoning they arrive at the conclusion that matter and force can neither be increased nor decreased. Matter, energy and force are eternal, infinite, beginningless and endless. One can change into the other, but the substance is always-there. Scientists who first started with the assumption of the existence of the law of cause and effect have, after a process of reasoning and experiment, reached a stage, where further phenomena could not be explained by, or correlated to, the law of cause and effect. Science has brought us almost to the gateway of the reality of truth.

Applying the very same logic and reasons, our ancient seers and sages, though by a different process, have come to the conclusion that eternal truth or ultimate reality is beyond cause and effect. Truth, or Satyam in Sanskrit, means that which exists in all times and under all circumstances and is changeless.

Our ancient sages have of themselves posed certain questions in their quest of truth. In the final analysis, the whole universe consists of the cognising self or the objects cognised or enjoyed and the cognition or power which is the bond between the two. Science for the most part confined itself to the external objective world which is the thing cognised, and has left out of account the other two. When we see a thing, it is not the thing that we see but an image of it on the retina which is interpreted by the mind to the self.er—tucnaver. It is the same with sound and other sensory perceptions.

Turning to our subjective self or the knower, we find that it is the source of all knowledge. By a process of reasoning and analysis, our ancient sages and

seers have come to the conclusion that the self or the atman above is the permanent thing and is equated with the universal self or the supreme Brahman; they have also pointed out that the subjective self or the enjoyer, the thing enjoyed, and the cognition or power which brings about the enjoyment are but aspects of the supreme Brahman. In this view, this world yj not unreal, but Atman or Brahman itself. This eternal truth or the ultimate reality is existence itself and the whole universe, energy and phenomena of nature are but manifestations of the same. That truth or ultimate reality is beyond cause and effect and beyond reason and intellect. Reason can only point out that it is beyond cause and effect, but the ultimate truth can only be realised in the depths of Samadhi.

We have seen, therefore, how starting on different roads we have been able to reach the ultimate truth which is the God of religion, the self of philosophy and the energy of science.

Om Shanthi! Shanthi!! Shanthihi!!!

Saint Sayings

God places us in our respective situations which, however miserable or happy they may be from the external point of view, are always for our good.

If you are in right earnest to learn the mysteries of God, He will send you the Sadguru, the right teacher. You need not trouble yourself about finding out a Guru.

'"There is always a shadow under the lamp, while its light illumines the surrounding objects. So men in the immediate proximity of a prophet do not understand him. Those who live far off are charmed by his spiritual glow and his extraordinary powers.

A man gets anything he wishes if he makes efforts like Bhagiratha.

H. H. SWAMI KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

God Realization

THE ultimate aim of human existence is the realization of God. Great saints and seers, as the forerunners of humanity, have left us a rich heritage. Our sacred scriptures are full of the invaluable experiences of many saints and sages in the path of God realization. The paths are innumerable ; the different paths are

suitable to the physical, mental and spiritual attainments of different aspirants. There are no cut and dry plans. The uniqueness of Hinduism is its emphasis on the unlimited freedom given to the aspirants. Here one of the many paths of God realization is described. The following seven ways, if practised disinterestedly, will lead to God realization. They are association, prayer, service, kindness, meditation, humility and benevolence.

Man is so engrossed in the material world that he scarcely has time or inclination to think of the majority of mankind. The best way out of this ignorance is the company of holy men. These holy men must have the requisite qualities such as forbearance and mercy, intense love towards all God's creation and tranquillity, good disposition and firm devotion to God. They should have renounced all things; even their kith and kin, for the sake of the Lord. Their mind should be firmly set on the Lord and should take great pleasure in listening to or telling stories of the Lord. The company of holy men can cure the evil of worldly attachments in others and create an yearning for God without which nothing is possible in spiritual life.

With the beginning of yearning for God arises the great necessity for prayer or bhajans. In our sacred scriptures volumes have been written on the efficacy of prayer. It is the communion of the soul with God and a bridge, as it were, between the human and the divine. Real prayer is an outpouring of the heart. It should not have any taints of selfishness. During prayer the body, mind and heart should be in tune with the divine. Then it is ennobling, purifying and uplifting to the devotee. It was through the power of prayer that devotees like Dhruva, Prahlada and Mira were blessed with God realization.

The result of prayer is love for all the creation *or* God. The love manifests itself as service to humanity. The service should be disinterested, rendered with pure mind, speech and body. All opportunities for service should be regarded as God's favours. By rendering service to another, one should neither feel that one has conferred an obligation nor regard the recipient of service as in any way inferior.

Kindness is a supreme quality of a great soul. It is an intense desire to remove misery in whatever *form* it is found in the world. Did not Lord Buddha, the great world teacher, make kindness one of his cardinal' teachings ? Non-violence is a negative or passive quality of refraining from doing injury whereas kindness involves doing something which contributes to the happiness of another. Lord Chaitanya expressed in a nutshell his entire teaching in three things : " Taste in the name of God, kindness to beings, and association of devotees—beyond these , three, I know of no other way."

Meditation is the golden key to unlock the gate leading to God vision. At first the mind wavers and wanders. The purpose of meditation is to steady the mind, to control it and apply it to whatever .purpose we want it to do. We can achieve this object only by daily, continued and resolute practice.

Pride is the enemy of man which leads him to a fall. It can be replaced by cultivating humility. We must be meek and low before God to draw His compassion. It is said, " In all the eighteen Puranas Maharishi Vedavyasa inculcated only two teachings, viz., benevolence is the'cause of virtue and tyranny the cause of "sin." For *a* man- who has benevolence in his heart, there is nothing unattainable in the world.

Association, prayer, service, kindness, meditation, humility and benevolence are the golden stairs up the steps of which the aspirant can climb to the temple of divine wisdom and God realization.

Saint Saying

To live in the world or to leave it depends upon the will of God. Therefore work, leaving everything to him, What else can you do ?

H. H. SWAMI KESAVAHJI'S SELECTION'

Spiritual Life

WHY not make a habit of using some of our spare time for turning inwards in search of spiritual interests, adventures and experience ? This will be more thrilling than any of other purely temporal interests.

Spiritual life has to be lived all day long ; otherwise, it will be many years or even lives before we begin to unlock the deeper powers of the soul and enter into the wider vision of life.

A suffering world is calling to us ; within us is the power to heal waiting to be discovered and released. Great sages and saints like Sri Sai Baba, who are out to serve the world, are eagerly watching to see who next is coming to them to share their agelong and tireless labours. Shall we, then, not find time to turn inwards and seek the God within so that we may reveal Him to others and so that spiritual life may become a living reality to us and to them ?

The spiritual realist must bring everything down to.the matter of fact in everyday life. He must make his philosophy and his doctrines apply to the problems of the world and bring all his faculties to the search for their solution. Every aspirant for spiritual life should remember the following nine points as the cardinal points of his spiritual compass to guide him in the ocean of life, to reach the heaven of God realization : —

1. The aspirant must make frequent, impartial and dispassionate self-examinations.

2. We must trace the errors and deficiencies, which examinations reveal to their source in the inner nature and decide upon the best method of eliminating them. A weakness is always found to be due to the absence of a virtue, e. g., worry arising out of fear ; try to build up faith and courage.

3. The aspirant should pay daily, hourly attention to conduct, speech, feeling and thought, continually checking looseness, impurity, coarseness, general lack of tone and any other particular error revealed by the regular reviews.

He should deliberately mould his character nearer to the ideal, "Live nobly", and refine life until its nature becomes truly spiritual.

4. The aspirant should continually repeat the act of self-dedication. Daily and hourly, he should renew the consecra-tion of the whole] life to the service of God and live in the light of his consecration.

5. The aspirant should perform regular meditation. He should rather treat meditation as a great adventure in the inner worlds. We are bound to win in the

end, though we may seem to fail at first. Meditation, if successful, produces a sense of actual union or of stepping into and becoming one with the glorious light of the higher consciousness and of being, identified with that light rather than with the shadows cast upon the lower world.

The meditation should consist of four elements :

(a) Meditation directed towards gaining expansion of consciousness and deepening the realisation of spiritual verities.

(b) The refinement of vehicles—emotion, mind, etc.

(c) The acquisition of virtues and the overcoming of every weakness.

(d) The radiation of love over the whole world.

6. The aspirant should strive to win a living realiszation of the actual existense of God, both as a divine and perfect conciousness within every man and as the saviour of man

7. The aspirant should bear the presence and blessings of God everywhere and live as though He were actually present all the time.

8. The aspirant should watch continually for wider fields of pouring the blessings and the healing love of God upon the world.

9. The spiritual aspirant should build in, especially, the three virtues which form the basis of the spiritual life. He should strive in all things to be strong, humble and pure.

Purpose Of Religion

IT is through religion that a just and real social order can be set up for the emancipation of man. History tells us that in the various epochs, high-souled personages, took birth and used religion to set up the well-being of downtrodden and humbled humanity: without religion man's life in the mundane world is miserable.

At present we see so many religious institutions in the world. We also see that there are tendencies on the part of various followers of one religion or other to praise their own religion and throw mud on others. These have, in consequence, given rise to various conflicts, persecutions and dissensions. The

strength and success of one religion depended on the physical might of its adherents.

It is good that harmony should be found out of many diverse religions. The first conference of that kind was convened in 1893 in Chicago when protagonists of various religions took part. India was fortunate to have Swami Vivekananda attend the conference and thunder forth with eloquence the importance and greatness of Hinduism.

The superiority of Hinduism consists in this that its scriptures (the Vedas and the Upanishads) teach us the nature of God, His attributes, the superiority of spirit over matter and ways of how to attain God. Further the influx of many religious fanatics and dogmas has not crushed the above conception, but in the end they were assimilated.

Buddhism, Jainism, Zorastrainism, Christianity and Mahome-danism held for a time some sway over the country and these could not crush Hinduism. On the other hand, they have given a new orientation to the ancient religion, which commands universal acceptance.

For others, a federation of religions may seem a curious thing. But to a Hindu, it is not so. To him, the whole world of religions is only a travelling, a coming up of different men and women through various conditions and circumstances to the same goal. Every religion is only evolving a God out of the material man, and the same God is the inspirer of all of them. According to him, so many contradictions in the world are only apparent, coming from the same truth adapting itself to the varying circumstances of different natures. Lord Krishna declared, " I am in every religion as the thread through a string of pearls."

Hinduism is the religion of humanity; it deals with the knowledge of self and takes one to the self-realization which is oneness with the all-pervading God. It has no conflict with other religions.

The Avatar of Sri Sai is a recent illustration of the above fact. He was a Mahommedan fakir to the followers of Islam, a Samartha Sadguru to the Hindus; and a harbinger of peace and harmony to various other sects. He showed

how persons of various religious persuasions can come together and live in peace and harmony. His mission is now spreading with tremendous, force throughout the length and breadth of India. In it will be achieved the federation of all religions.

We are living in this mundane world which is full of turmoil and it is very easy for us to forget religion which awakens us to the real state of affairs which we are in, shows us the gate to perpetual bliss and keeps away from being dragged down to the abject life of beasts doing nothing but eating and drinking and making merry. Such being the case, there must be some extraordinary thing which will now and then remind us as to who we are and what we should do, so that we may not be completely oblivious to our duties here. It is religion that fulfils this purpose. As Bhagavan Sri Krishna says in the Gita, " Whoever wants to see Me in whatever light or form, *I* readily fulfil his desire. O thou son of Pritha, all people travel through paths chalked out by Me alone."

Saint Saying

Look life in the face from the soul's inner strength and become master of circumstances.

Bane Of Worldliness

GOD is like the wish-yielding tree of the celestial world (Kalpataru) which gives whatever one asks of it. So one should be careful to give up all worldly desires when one's mind has been purified by religious exercises. Just listen to a story:

A certain traveller came to a large plain in the course of his travels. As he had been walking in the sun for many hours, he was thoroughly exhausted and was heavily perspiring; so he sat down in the shade of a tree to rest a little. Presently he began to think what a comfort it would be if he could but get a soft bed there to sleep on. He was not aware that he was sitting under the celestial tree. ,

As soon as the thought arose- in his mind, he found a nice bed by his side. He felt much astonished, but all the same stretched himself on it. Now he

thought to himself how pleasant it would be were a young damsel to come there and gently stroke his legs. No sooner did the thought arise in his mind than he found a young damsel sitting at his feet and stroking his legs. The traveller felt supremely happy. . ...

Presently he felt hungry and thought: "I have got whatever I wished for; could I not then get some food ?" Instantly he found various kinds of delicious food spread before him. He at once fell to eating, and having helped himself to his heart's content, stretched himself again on his bed. He now began to revolve in his mind the events of the day. While thus occupied he thought, "If a tiger should attack me all of a sudden?" In an instant a large tiger jumped upon him and broke his neck and began to drink his blood. In this way the traveller lost his life.

Such is the fate of men in general. If during your meditation you pray for men or money or worldly honours, your desires will, no doubt, be satisfied to some extent; but, mind you. there is the dread of the tiger behind the gifts you get. Those tigers, disease, bereavements, loss of honour and wealth, etc., are a thousand times more terrible than the live tiger.

Mind And Its Mischief

In the days when Nawabs were ruling, one of them had Nanak brought by force before him. The Nawab asked Nanak why he did not come when sent for. Nanak replied that he was no longer under his command, but he was devoted to God only. The Nawab replied that if Nanak had become a devotee of God, the Nawab also had become a devotee of the Almighty. He ordered Nanak to go to the musjid on Friday to offer prayers to God along with the Nawab.

As God is all pervading. Nanak agreed to go to the musjid with the Nawab all paraphernalia and and accompanied by famous Khajis Nanak began to offer prayers. All Mohammadans, according to their ancient custom, began to pray on their bended knees. But Nanak was standing.

After the prayers were over, the Nawab, observing Nanak standing during prayer, questioned him as to whether he came there to offer prayers along with him or to simply stand. Then Nanak with his power of devotion was able to read

what was passing in the mind of the Nawab and replied that he could not offer prayers along with the Nawab as the Nawab was all along thinking of bargaining for horses at Gandhara.

Then the Khaji who was sent by the Nawab questioned Nanak as to why he did not offer prayers with him at least. Then Nanak who was always devoted to God calmly replied that he was unable to offer prayers along with him as the Khaji's mind during prayers was oppressed with the idea that his young colt might fall into the pit which was in the compound wall.

When they heard this, the Nawab and the Khaji stared at each other and hung their heads in shame as their mind was not really at prayer though they were physically in the musjid.

The above incident clearly demonstrates the incalculable mischief and uncontrollable nature of mind. Devotees must devoutly try to bring mind under control by constant practice and make it steady as Sri Krishna taught Arjuna to attain God's bliss.

Essence Of Gita

THE Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita constitute the triple authorities of Vedanta—" Prasthana Traya." The Upanishads are the final authorities in matters of spiritual knowledge. They are rightly described as the Himalayas of the Soul, since they record the spiritual heights reached by the ancient Maharshis of this great land.

The Brahma Sutras systematize the Upanishadic philosophy in a set of aphorisms which are short and full of deep meaning. This can be comprehended only in the light of various traditional interpretations which have given rise to the different schools of Vedanta. The Bhagavad Gita contains the essence of the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras in a concrete and easy way to be understood by the masses. Every chapter in the Gita ends with the citation that it is the Upanishad sung by the Lord and that it is a Brahma Vidya.

Not only did the Gita enjoy popularity and importance in days gone by, but with the passing of years its importance and value have increased at home and abroad. William Von Humboldt regards the Gita as " most beautiful, perhaps the

only true, philosophical song existing in any known tongue. " Sir Edwin Arnold writes : " So lofty are many of its declarations, so sublime its aspirations, so pure and tender its piety, that Schlegal, after his study of the poem, breaks forth into outbursts of delight and praise towards its unknown author."

The Grand Philosophy, the high ideals and the true solutions to the various problems of life contained in the Gita have a universal appeal. This appeal is greatly enhanced by its non-sectarian character, as Lord Krishna says : " However men approach me, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is mine." There is hope of salvation offered to the lowest and the lost. As Mahatma Gandhi says, " The Gita is the Universal mother; she turns away nobody. Her door is wide open to anyone who knocks."

The Gita teaches unity in diversity —a great necessity in the modern age. It is a scripture of yoga which means becoming one with the Divine Life, being in harmony with the Divine Law, In order to reach the balance, we must gain an equilibrium so that self joined to the Eternal Self shall not be affected by pleasure or pain, desire or aversion, or any one of the pairs of the opposites. Moderation is, therefore, the key-note of the Gita. The disciple has to learn to attune himself with the one supreme Self. In the midst of toil and turmoil of life, he must rest in the Lord of Peace, discharging his duties, not for the result of his actions, but as a divine duty.

The Gita gives us the explanation for the problem of good and the evil in the world, i. e., the Law of Karma. In other words, the Gita teaches the science of Karma Yoga. It shows the way of doing things without getting entangled in ' Samsara,' through ' Nishkama Karma.' The background of battle in which the teaching is given is symbolical. It shows that a Karma Yogi should have calm and poise even in the midst of universal disaster. A true man of spirit has steadied his mind and is not affected by the changing vicissitudes of life. As the Gita says : "He attains peace to whom all desires flow as rivers flow into the ocean, which is filled with water, but remains unmoved."

In conclusion, "the Gita is meant to lift the aspirant from the lower levels of renunciation, where objects are renounced, to the loftier heights where desires are dead, and where the Yogi dwells in calm and ceaseless contemplation, while his body and mind are actively employed in discharging the duties that fall to his lot in life. That the spiritual man need not be a recluse, that union with the divine may be achieved and maintained in the midst of worldly affairs, that the obstacles to that union lie not outside us, but within us—such is the central lesson of Bhagavad Gita." (Dr. Annie Besant). The last stanza of the Gita is a message of eternal hope to people of all ages and countries and leads us to prosperity, victory and happiness.

Gandhi, The Mahatma

MAHATMA Gandhi belonged to India and the world. His life was a long experiment with truth and his name became a synonym for truth and non-violence—satyam and ahimsa. He embodied in himself an idea and an ideal. Gandhism is a symbol of the idea of unity among Hindus and Muslims, the high-caste man and the Harijan, the rich and the poor, the prince and the peasant. He lived and died for the ideal of service and sacrifice. His was a dedicated life to the service of mankind.

Though he was preoccupied with the solution of Indian problems, his message has a universal appeal and was indeed far in advance of his times. He exerted a spiritual influence in politics, economics, religion, sociology, industry and in every other field of human activity. He has been rightly called a saint among politicians and politician among saints. What is the keynote of this glorious life ?

Real India is rural India. As such, Gandhiji was the true representative of the Indian peasant. Though intellectually he was more keen and alert than the average peasant, he had the peasant's outlook in life and implicit faith in the supremacy of God. The highest teachings of religions crystallised into action in his life. He led a life of unsurpassed purity, compassionate love, overflowing sympathy, iron resolution, courtly bearing and exquisite tact. These shining virtues attracted to him the classes and the masses of this vast land. Despite his

early English training, he retained his noble characteristic of implicit faith <; and this grew as the years rolled by. His life became hallowed by his communion with God every moment of his life. Thus his thoughts, words and deeds were purified and gained added strength and power because they emanated from his innermost, intuitive spirit.

Gandhiji's glorious life was founded on the bedrock of truth. He examined his thoughts, words and deeds in the searchlight of truth before he gave them to the world. He realised that freedom is the inalienable right of every human being. So he worked for India's freedom with consummate mastery, dauntless courage and dynamic energy. He had the vision of a prophet that truth will triumph in the end. Thus truth was a dominating influence in his life. He solved the various problems applying to them the touchstone of truth. He was the personification of truth and his life was a long experiment with truth. He recognised no defeat except failure to stand by truth.

The two world wars, the butchery in some parts of India strengthened his firm faith in non-violence as a superior weapon. Violence leaves behind a spirit of hatred and revenge. On the other hand, non-violence brings about a lasting change for good in the enemy; overcomes beastial hatred by divine love. He applied this principle as early as 1906 in South Africa. This technique was perfected in India and it was through this superior soul-force of ahimsa that Gandhiji brought freedom to India. He held that " non-violence implies voluntary submission to the penalty for non-co-operation with evil."

Again, " there is no half-way between truth and non-violence on the one hand and untruth and violence on the other hand. We may never be strong enough to be entirely non-violent in thought, word and deed. But we must keep non-violence as our goal, and make steady progress towards it. The attainment of freedom, whether for a man, a nation or the world, must be in exact proportion to the attainment of non-violence by each." Such was his strong conviction.

We can pay no better homage to his sacred memory than by trying in our own humble lives to follow in his glorious footsteps guided by the twin beacon-lights of truth and non-violence.

I humbly suggest that the authorities arrange to print the Gita and the Mahatma's teachings in all the languages in pocket-size editions with picturers of Sri Krishna and the Mahatma and present one copy to all Government servants so that they can put all his teachings into practice and tell the public to shun all evil-mindedness and communal bitterness and also persuade them to turn their activities to the path of righteousness and universal brotherhood.

Glories Of Pandaripur

Once Suta, the prince of the Powranikas, was asked by Sownaka and other sages to tell them of a place possessing the three qualities of " Kshetra, Thirtha, and Godly presence." He said that the same question was put by God Kumaraswamy to Lord Siva and then narrated the following as once told by Lord Siva to Kumaraswamy, Agastya and Parvati.

To the south of the river Bhima, there lies the Panduranga Kshetra. Once a Brahmin by name Pundarika lived there. He possessed all the good qualities. Though rich, he had no glamour for worldly splendour. He was a sanyasi in the midst of worldly life. His wife was a fitting partner to him, endowed with all chaste qualities.

Possessed of many servants, Pundarika himself attended on his parents and received the guests. After puja to Lord, he used to feed his parents first, then the guests, and afterwards he would take his daily meal. His wife would take her food last.

After some time Pundarika's parents passed away, in peace, and he was blessed with children who enjoyed life without any want. Then he removed himself to a hut, spent his days in deep meditation on Lord Sri Hari with penance and austetity. Pleased with such pure devotion, Lord Sri Hari appeared before Pundarika and asked him to name a boon that He would grant. Pundarika was overjoyed at this and out of pure selflessness implored God to grant that the spot on which Sri Hari was giving darsan to him should bs sanctified with Thirtha,

Moorthy and Kshethra and He would give darsan to devotees in the very from as He then appeared to him. Lord Sri Hari was immediately pleased with this selflessness and readily granted the boon. Lord Sri Hari further said that the place would bear His name and henceforth be called Pandaripur and Panduranga Kshetra, and he would be known as Panduranga, that the river Bhima would be a sacred Thirtha, and thus the locality would be great in having a combination of Thirta, Kshethra and Godly presence. God is thus revealing Himself at Pandaripur as Tri-Moorthi as Brahma in the morning, as Shiva at noon and as Vishnu in the evening.

The place has thus become great and religiously important. *It is* said that Maharishis offer worship to the Trinity there. It is also a firm belief that whoever offers worship to God Panduranga in sixteen ways is blessed with happiness and prosperity in this life and with Moksha after death.

It is stated that the above results follow if one carefully observes the following ways of worship. First the Tirtha, and then the Moorthy should be worshiped. The peepul Aswattha tree on the banks of the Padma Tirtha is sacred on account of its being worshipped by Gods as the dwelling place of Nara Narayana and that tree should be worshipped. Besides there are other Tirthas, known as Gundali, Narasimha, Agastya, Ganapati, Kalafa. Senna, Brahma and Chakra. Those who take bath in the above tirthas are said to be rid of all sins and also enable their ancestors to attain salvation.

There are one or two stories connected with this Panduranga Kshetra, which will illustrate the above mentioned aspects.

Once there was a Brahmin by name Nigama Sarma at Peetikapura. He drove out his parents and wife, who sought refuge in his sister's house. Nigama Sarma was addicted to prostitutes, who gradually knocked out all his riches and made him a beggar. Not inclined to leave off his evil habits he took to highway robbery and kept dancing girls. This too could not continue for long. He had to go to his sister's house. There he was well received by his sister and advised to behave well towards his wife and parents. For some time everything went on well.

Sometime after, Nigama Sarma began to think of his early life at Peetikapura, and one night he skulked away with the valuable jewellery of his sister. But on his way he was robbed and beaten up by thieves. He was given refuge by a cultivator who took him to his house. There he was well looked after by the farmer and his wife. Soon he became his former self and appeared handsome. The farmer's wife came to entertain lively thoughts on him. Nigama Sarma came to know of this affection and secretly loved her. In the absence of the husband in another village, Nigama Sarma eloped with his wife, settled down in a hunter's village and lived a hunter's life. The farmer's wife bore him a son.

But Nigama Sarma felt remorse for his evil life. One night he ran away to Narasimha Tirtha. There he lay dying. Yamadootas came to take his soul. But they were prevented by Lord Narasimha's Chakra. He attained Moksha. Though he was a great sinner, his death at the sacred place of Narasimha Tirtha absolved him of all his sins and earned him salvation.

The sacred town lies at a distance of 32 miles from Kurduwadi junction. It is noted for devotees like Pundarika, Janabai, Namdev, Tukaram, Jnaneswar, Eknath and Chokamela. They dedicated their lives to Vittoba. This is why the town has been held in great veneration for ages.

The remarkable feature of the Vittoba temple is that all pilgrims, irrespective of caste, creed, or sex, are permitted to touch the feet of the image of Vittoba at the time of darsan.

It is firmly believed that God Vittoba is responsive to prayers of devotees immediately and this accounts for thousands of pilgrims who visit the temple in and out of season.

I have visited this holy town on nine or ten occasions. But the craving for another visit is not diminished in me, as Ramakrishna Paramahamsa said that "God pervades the Universe everywhere, but you cannot see him everywhere, He manifests Himself more readily in sacred temples which are full of the spirit of

devotion, diffused by the life and spiritual practices of the devotees of former times."

Sai Baba also often declared, " I am at Pandaripur." This was witnessed by Tatya Patel at Pandaripur when he visited the Vittoba temple. Tatya Patel was the chief devotee of Sri Sai Baba.

Saint Sayings

Live humbly but nobly, braving all the storms of life with implicit trust in God and His dispensation.

H. H. SWAMI KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTION

Buddha's Teachings

IN the evolutionary ladder, it is said, there are millions in different stages of spiritual development, and there are only a few who have reached the topmost rung. They are the men made *ch.* perfect. One such perfect being is Lord Buddha, the flower of humanity.

As Prince Sidhartha, he was dissatisfied with life and started his quest for truth renouncing all earthly splendours, a vast kingdom, a beautiful wife Yasodhara and an only son. He trod the arduous path of spiritual life and spent many a year in search and suffering. After all the trials and tribulations of spiritual life, he reached the security of a haven, when enlightenment dawned on him. He had achieved the conquest of self. The mystery of the universe became an open book to him.

Thus Prince Sidhartha became the Buddha—the enlightened. He became "All-honoured, the Wisest, the Best, the Most Pitiful, the Teacher of Nirvana and the Law."—Rhys Davids- In his infinite compassion for suffering humanity, he preached the four Noble Truths. He said that in men's lives misery is greater than happiness—this is the first Noble Truth. All misery arises from the thirst for life—this is the second Noble Truth. Each man without help of priest or book can by his own efforts put an end to the craving which causes misery—this is the third Noble Truth. The fourth Noble Truth is the Noble Eightfold Path which leads to the ending of the misery. This consists of:

(i) Right Belief; (ii) Right Thought; (iii) Right Speech; (iv) Right actions ; (v) Right means of livelihood ; (iv) Right Energy ; (vii) Right contemplation ; and (viii) Right Realisation (Lord Buddha's first sermon).

He taught us not to serve the foolish, but serve only the wise, and to honour those who are worthy of it. We must live doing good deeds with right desires in our hearts. Everyone must have proper education and practise self-control and purity in thought, word and deed. As householders, we must have a peaceful calling, protect the father and mother and the family, help the relatives and bestow alms on the needy. We must abhor and abstain from sin and strong drink, cultivate reverence, humility, contentment and gratitude. We must love the company of holy men and listen to religious discourses.

Those who walk in this glorious path of righteousness are safe and invincible. This is the golden mean—the middle path— between the extremes of sensuousness on the one hand and asceticism on the other. This is the good Law proclaimed by Lord Buddha in his never-ending love for men. The same principles were taught to His devotees by Sai Baba of Shirdi, when He was in flesh and blood, as God is one, but His names are many.

Hope and Peace

Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi is bringing a message of hope and peace to His devotees and is showering His choicest blessings on all irrespective of caste, creed or colour. The saint lives and moves and makes Himself felt in all upright and righteous actions. His message is simply this: Universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. His mission is that service *gft* man kfservice of God.

Baba blesses all who see Him in every creature and who set before themselves the ideal of service to all creatures on earth. To such of His devotees as follow in His footsteps, He is the sole guide, philosopher and God. May all His devotees follow His example of love and service and convert the land we live in into a garden of Eden !

Just as He quickly responds to the call of His devotees in spite of long distance so He expects all to show their unswerving devotion to Him in all their deeds, words, and thoughts. Baba expects His devotees to serve the above ideal

by deep and abiding faith in Him and by complete surrender to Him. One who follows His footsteps with the above conditions is sure to secure a seat in the heart of Baba and become merged in Him and is sure to get all the benefits (moral, material and spiritual).

Message Of The Ramayana

SRI Rama's life, enshrined in the golden pages of the Ramayana, has exercised a continuous and pervasive influence on our people. Dating back to remote antiquity, the life-story of Sri Rama is still a living force. The ideals implicit in it have permeated in innumerable ways and influenced in different degrees, the individual conduct and social behaviour of man.

The variousincidents in Sri Rama's life provide object lessons to serve aTrhfallible guide for our conduct. The ethical advice contained ^therein is the most valuable aspect of the Ramayana. Adherence to truth and pledged word, courage and faithfulness are emphasized as essential virtues of man. The spirit of sacrifice which enabled Sri Rama to give up the crown gladly in performance of a filial duty occupies the pride of place among the many virtues of Sri Rama. The various other incidents in his life hold out the concept of Dharma which is an amalgam of the duties and responsibilities of the individual to the family, society and state. The approach presented in the Ramayana is rationalistic and creative. To a discerning reader there is in Ramayana much to learn about enduring values like truth, self-control, asceticism, generosity and above all a sense of duty.

Sri Rama symbolises the ideal man who stands unruffled in the midst of temptations and is unaffected by the common foibles of humanity. He is also the manifestation of the indomitable spirit of man that enabled him to sacrifice everything dear and near for the sake of high ideals. His life is a call to action, to meet the challenges of life, keeping in view the spiritual background of our country and the higher purpose of life.

All that has been said in the Ramayana should make a special appeal to the present generation which is facing a crisis of conscience, torn by conflicting ideas. The message of the Ramayana is universal in its appeal. There is

something in its quality which is capable of being constantly renewed, and which will not become out of date with the passage of time.

Though long ages have passed since the events depicted in the Ramayana took place, successive generations have found something that has a freshness and applicability to the spiritual and moral problems confronting humanity. The ultimate aim of the advice contained therein is the attainment of the supremacy of the human individual, overcoming the limitations imposed by environment.

Sri Sai Baba during His life-time, annually celebrated with great eclat the Sri Rama Navami festival to impress upon his devotees the importance of such a celebration. This day was sacred to all his devotees who turned up in large numbers to participate in the Rama Navami festival. Sometimes the number went upto 75,000 and more. In these celebrations, Hindus and Muslims participated in harmony. Sri Sai Baba probably had an end in view (p bring about the unification of the two communities and ensure maintenance of peace in our land. How important and valuable the realization of such an objective is proved by later events in our country. Sri Sai Baba had an unerring instinct for what is good for our people and country. His concern for them was as great as/for His devotees. He asked His devotees to utter Rama Nam as a panacea for the ills of body and mind.

Following the guidance given by Sri Sai Baba let us recall Sri Rama's life of love and sacrifice and pray for His grace and blessing so that we may have the wisdom and strength of mind always to tread the path of truth and righteousness.
Om Shanthi! Shanthi ! ! Shanthihi!! !

Saint Sayings

Grace is equally for all. But it is received according to the sincerity of each one. It does not depend on outward circumstances but on sincere aspiration and openness.

Stand above the petty praise and blame of the world.

H. H. SWAMY KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

Realising God

IT is truly said that in this confused world there is greater inclination towards materialism than towards spirituality. The majority of people are absorbed in materialism and therefore have no desire to attach much value to spiritualism. The rapid advance of science with its wonderful achievements has added to the materialistic tendencies of mankind today. People in this iron age demand direct proof of everything they are told to believe in. They are not satisfied with mere Puranas, Vedas, or assertions.

As spiritual truth cannot be shown in the same manner as a material thing, many people do not bestow even a moment's thought on Godly things. But India has produced a galaxy of saints and sages from immemorial past upto the present day. Some of them, for example, Buddha, Kabir, Shankaracharya, Ramanujacharya and Ramakrishna Paramahamsa had their own way of teaching their devotees to lead a righteous life and to shun untruth and intrigue.

Unlike all these saints, sages and prophets, Sri Sai Baba's life and work tell a quite different tale and His way of teaching His devotees in a practicable manner has been unique. He attracted thousands of devotees to Shirdi. They were taught in a practical manner how to realise God and at the same time to lead a life of dispassion in this world. Though His physical body to which many Bhaktas were zealously devoted has disappeared, His all-pervading influence, His compassionate love for mankind, His overflowing sympathy for the suffering humanity and His overwhelming solicitude for the welfare of His devotees have been felt and experienced daily by innumerable persons all over India. The greatness of Sri Sai Baba's nature, the dignity of His thoughts, the grace of His simplicity and the nobility of His purpose in life have not only inspired many but also increased the intensity of their faith in the light of experience which has taught them the supremacy of the good and the imperative necessity of realizing the fundamental unity of life irrespective of the countless barriers of caste, colour or creed.

Sai Baba's early life is shrouded in mystery. By the time He arrived at Shirdi, there is recorded evidence to show that He had already developed a

unique personality with a prophetic vision, and an incomparable excellence of spiritual powers. Though at first He alleviated human physical sufferings with medicines, He gave it up and thereafter the " Udhi " from the sacred fire, kept burning even today in " Dwarakamayi "—the mosque where He lived—has been the panacea for all the ills of mankind, physical, mental or emotional. Bathed in His spiritual effulgent presence and divine grace, many derived immense benefit with memorable experiences and life-long adherence to a life of yearning after truth and reality.

Sai Baba was a "Trikala Gyani." With His knowledge of the past, the present and the future He viewed the twin laws of karma and reincarnation in their proper perspective and rescued man)'with consummate skill and mastery from appalling difficulties and dangers. Sai Baba was an apostle of universal religion. He was one of the greatest advocates of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Let us redidicate ourselves to put into practice in our daily lives the following main principles of Sri Sai Baba's teachings as contained in slokas 13-14 in Chapter XII of the Bhagavad Gita:-

" Who hateth not of all which lives, living himself benign,
Compassionate, from arrogance exempt,
Exempt from love of self, unchangeable
By good or ill, patient, contented, firm
In faith, mastering himself, true to his word
Seeking Me, heart and soul vowed unto Me
That man I love ! Who troubleth not his kind
And is not troubled by them ; clear of wrath,
Living too high for gladness, grief or fear, That man I love!."

The lives and teachings of great saints like Sai Baba gives us a comforting reassurance that we are the inheritors of a profound spiritual heritage and are the descendants of immortal Maharishis—the saints and seers of India. May they bless us with the resoluteness of conviction, heroic fortitude, intuitive perception and the action to strive for the triumph of truth,

goodness and beauty and thus make the land the home of peace, prosperity and plenty.

Om Shanthi ! Shanthi! ! Shanthihi! ! !

Ending Social Evils

A constant conflict takes place between Dharma and Adharma or good and bad. Adharma generally entices a person to perform unworthy deeds. However, ultimately the Dharma triumphs and the good comes out victorious in the final battle. But a strong fight has to be put up against the bad to subdue it.

All our Puranas, or mythological tales lend huge support to this truth which in fact is the very essence of our scriptures. A careful scrutiny of our Puranas will also reveal that man, endeavouring to subdue evil, should necessarily establish a rapport between himself and the Almighty. Only this rapproache-ment gives the man the necessary strength and courage to fight Adharma. It also saves him from falling into the depths of lust.

Vijayadasami, also well-known as Dasara or Ramlila, is one of the popular festivals observed in our country. It can be regarded as the final of the Navaratris or the nine nights. During these nine nights, it is said that Devi, also called Maha Maya, incarnated Herself as Maha Kali, Mahishasuramardini, Maha-saraswathi, Durga etc., The Devi in all her incarnations destroyed the wicked, protecting the good. Thereby the Goddess has proved that Dharma will prevail over Adharma. Needless to mention, therefore, that the observance of Vijayadasami is still relevant.

We, in our country, have successfully solved a number of problems. Still, social evils like dowry and others confront society and they should be put an end to. At this juncture, I would like to mention that the noble teaching^ of Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi, the embodiment of love and truth, will, if put into practice, effectively eradicate these social evils. It is noteworthy that Sri Sai Baba's teachings are gaining added importance as days pass by. Baba will be a tower of unfailing strength to all those who repose implicit confidence in Him and who completely surrender themselves to Him.

Spiritual Maxims

When visiting a sage or going to a temple, you should never go empty-handed. You have to take something, however trifling, as an offering. Bow your head where others are bowing. Veneration never goes unrewarded. Remain always strong and steadfast in your own faith, but eschew all bigotry and intolerance,

Anger is a sign of Tamas In anger man loses all discrimination. Hanuman set fire to Lanka, but he had not the sense then to apprehend that it might burn even the place where Sita Was staying.

Men are quick to blame; so pay no heed to what others speak of you. In living your life of peace and virtue, be nidifferent alike to the praise and censure of mankind. One develops various propensities according to the company one moves in. And again one seeks the company congenial to one's own propensities. " Gurus can be had by hundreds and thousands, but of chelas (disciples) there is not one" is an ancient saying. It means that many are the persons who can give good advice, but those who follow it are few.

"Sin, like mercury is hard to digest. As long as you live, learn every day the mysteries of love and devotion. It will be to your advantage always. Heaven sometimes speaks through the mouths of lunatics, drunkards and children. The devil never enters the house wherein songs in praise of Hari are always sung. There is no fire like lust; no sin like hate ; no sorrow like the sorrow of existence : no happiness is greater than peace of mind.

He who is wholly free from lust knows neither sorrow nor fear. From lust springs sorrow, from lust springs fear.

H, H. SWAMY KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

Paths to Immortality

In the kingdom of God reason, intellect, and learning are of no avail. There the dumb speak, the blind see, and the deaf hear.

'When the grace of the Almighty descends on any one, he immediately understands his mistakes ; knowing this you should not dispute.

Visit not the miracle mongers and those who exhibit occult powers. These men are stragglers from the path of truth. Their minds have become entangled in psychic powers, which are like veritable meshes in the way of the pilgrim to Brahman. Beware of these powers, and desire them not.

"No quality will get a man more friends than a disposition to admire the qualities of others.

The mind that is much arrogant and insolent with prospefl but is cast down with adversity is generally abject and base. Watch lest prosperity destroy generosity. Arrogance is the outgrowth of prosperity.

When the world blames and slanders us, our business is not to be vexed at it, but rather to consider whether there is any foundation for it, any truth at bottom,

The contagion of cheer has a wonderful effect. It transforms fog into light, depression into brightness, sickness into health. It should be taught in all schools before anything else.

H. H. SWAMI KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

Lights On Life Divine

In this age of Kali three days' ardent yearning to see God is enough for a man to obtain divine grace.

A guru is like the mighty Ganga. Men throw all filth and refuse into the Ganga, but the holiness of that river is not diminished thereby. So is the Guru above all petty insult and censure.

Gnana is like a man and Bhakti is like a woman. Knowledge has entry only up to the drawing room of God, but love can enter His inner apartments.

RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

"-Charity, the performance of one's duty, the observance of vows general and particular, the hearing of scriptures, meritorious acts and all other works—all these culminate in the control of mind. The control of mind is the highest yoga.

"Grief, joy, fear, anger, greed, infatuation, desire, etc., as well as birth and death are observed to belong to egoism, and not to the Atman.

SRI KRISHNA

To say a good word is an easy obligation; but not to speak ill requires only our silence, which costs us nothing.

ARCHBISHOP TULLOTSON

Something is wrong with a man's religion unless it produces in him a certain gaiety of spirit which reflects the essential joy and hopefulness of his creed.

REV. R. H. ELLIOT

When you make a mistake, don't look back at it long. Take the reason of the thing into your mind, and then look forward. Mistakes are lessons of wisdom. The past cannot be changed. The future is yet in your power.

HUGH WHITE

Transform reason into ordered intuition; let all thyself be light. This is thy goal.

'Transform the animal into the driver of the herds, let all thyself be Krishna. This is thy goal.

True love and concentration lead much quicker to the divine than an arduous " Tapasya ".

SRI AUROBINDO

Virtue will desert the man who through lack of wisdom drinks wine. He will be an object of scorn to all. This is my message to humanity, which should be regarded as an imperative scriptural injunction.

SUKRACHARYA

He conquers the world who patiently puts up with the abuse • of his neighbours. He who controls his anger as a horseman breaks in an unruly horse is indeed a charioteer and not he who merely holds the reins, but lets the horse go whither it would.

The wounds inflicted by weapons may close in time, scalds may heal gradually, but wounds inflicted by words remain painful as long as one lives.

MAHABHARATA

Truth is greater than power or prosperity and has to be guarded at all costs and not the kingdom.

Good and evil come from destiny and cannot be avoided.

When calamities are imminent, judgment is first destroyed.

Victory awaits the patient, those whom prosperity makes arrogant meet with destruction.

YUDHISHTIRA

H. H. SWAMY KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

Hope, Your Guardian Genius

"The best way to succeed in life is to act on the advice you give to others.

Things that make us age, our hair white and our faces wrinkled are worry, doubt, fear and inability to smile. A spirit of cheerfulness and happy thoughts will keep all these things away.

Anger makes a rich man hated and a poor man scorned.

"If things seem to go wrong, don't blame God. Search out your own mind and if you probe deeply, you will find there the root of all troubles.

'We were created for brotherhood, not for international strife. Let us educate our young to become heroes of peace rather than martyrs of war. Unless we do/ we cannot eliminate war. C/ic.5

- The Lord loveth a cheerful giver. It is probable that He also loveth a cheerful loser.

Confidence imparts wondrous inspiration to its possessor. It bears him on in security either to meet danger or to find matter of glorious trial.

A poor man wants only wants few things ; a covetous man all things.

'Difficulties are sent to be overcome. The weakling will collapse in the face of difficulties. The strong will be up and doing. Confidence makes man strong; therefore have confidence in your self and in your work.

Against lies, calumnies, etc., dignity is the only weapon. Never let any one see that anything said by your enemies has touched you. In short, act as if you did not dream you had enemies.

The truest sign of being born with great qualities is to be born without envy.

'Little failings eat holes in the citadel of character.

-Friendship is to be purchased only by friendship. A man may have authority over others; but he can never have their heart but by giving his own.

" Return good for evil; love begets love; hatred begets hatred.

The practical values of religion are inspiring vision, unfailing energy, unlimited patience. We must get back to the right attitude towards one another before peace and prosperity can return to the world.

If you wish success in life, make perserverance your bosom friend, experience your wise counsellor, caution your elder brother and hope your guardian angel.

H. H. SWAMY KESAVAIAHJI'S SELECTIONS

Look Up, Climb, Be Happy

"A good conscience makes for great happiness. In that a clean mind is ever a joyful possession. A true conscience cares not for false accusations, or poverty or discomfort within.

'True courage and courtesy always go hand in hand. The bravest men are the most forgiving and the most anxious to avoid quarrels.

The easiest thing of all is to deceive one's self; for what a man wishes he generally believes to be true.

Democracy is belief in the conviction that there extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people.

Set a bound to your desires. Think not of how much others have, but of how much which they have you can do perfectly well without. Be not the slaves of show or circumstances.

Little reading, much thinking, little speaking and much hearing ; that is the way to be wise.

He that showeth mercy when it may be best spared will receive mercy when it shall be most needed.

The Creator has bidden every man to look up, not down, to climb, not to grovel. No man can be successful who is always talking about depression.

A courageous foe is better than a cowardly friend.

Stop your criticism of others. Dont worry about the faults of your neighbour rather look to your own. You will probably find more soot in your chimney than in the chimneys of others.

Laziness travels so slowly that poverty soon overtakes it.

'Unless you are deliberately kind to every creature, you will often be cruel to many.

It is not fair to judge an apple tree by the worst apple on it, nor a man by his meanest deed or speech. to

Give every man the ear, but few the voice, take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.

They ask me for secrets of holiness; for myself I know no secret than to love God with all my heart and my neighbour (which is all mankind) as myself.

Who is the happiest of men? He who values the merits of others, and in their pleasure takes joy, as if it were his own.

It is easy to bask in the sunshine of prosperity. The crucial test of a nation, as of an individual, is its conduct under hardship and adversity.

" What is the root of evil ? Craving, hatred and delusion. And what is the root of good ? To be free from craving, hatred and delusion is the root of good.

His Holiness Swami Kesavaiahji

A Beacon-light of Sri Sai Baba

To understand Sri Sai Baba is easy only for his devotees. One can read Sri Sai Satcharitra written during the life time of Sri Sai Baba (and published by Sri Sai Baba Samsthan, Shirdi) and understand Sai to an extent. Without reading Sai Satcharitra and without hearing the Leelas of Sri Sai Baba from anybody the great devotee who realised Sri Sai Baba on 1—7—1939 (at Dharmavaram in Anantapur District now in Andhra Pradesh) in a few hours after merely hearing the name of Sri Sai Baba is Swami Kesavaiahji.

Revered Swamiji was born on Sravana Bahula Amavasya day of Hevalambi year, at the end of the nineteenth century. His father Sri Swami Balaiah was a ryot and a devout Hindu. A peculiar religious temper seems to have taken powerful hold of Swamiji's mind, and it continued as the ruling principle throughout his life. He preferred charity to the breaking of a coconut in the temple. In his school days he stood first in the Bible classes and had a vision of Jesus Christ. He learnt the Koran and had a vision of Prophet Mohammed. He met mystics like Sadhu Sunder Singh. Though a non-believer in temple worship and idolatory, he had the unique privilege of being blessed by Lord Muruga at Palani, where he was advised to go on a pilgrimage, after his daughter was cured. His commonsense was strong and his power of observation was keen. Sooth-sayers predicted his sainthood. Swamiji began his life as a clerk in the Registration Department in the Composite State of Madras. Very soon, he was a Sub-Registrar and earned for himself a go.od .name. He ,was sympathetic to the poor and people described him as a "Saint Sub-Registrar". His superiors recognized his worth and paid encomiums, and credited him, with the covoted Red Entries, six times. He was a kind hearted house-holder, honest and hard working officer counted with integrity and character.

Wonderful was the grace and kindness of Sri Sai Baba for He drew the Devotees to Him, or how else Sri Swami Kesavaiahji, then working at Dharmavaram would know Him? By the grace of Sri Sai Baba he became a " Kripa Siddha ", overnight, on 1—7—1939. Then he was ready to diffuse and preach the teachings of His Master to the humanity. All the "Siddhis" were at his command. He neither practised nor craved for them. They flowed in profusely naturally by the grace of Sri Sai Baba. He never made a show of his worth. If anybody went to see him, to have his dahhan, he sometimes even without being asked, would give very liberally his spiritual wealth, just as the Sacred Ganga flowing from the matted locks of Lord Shiva, sanctified the Indian soil.

Sri Sai Baba's grace flowing through Swami Kesavaiahji, bestowed on thousands the blessing of physical well-being, mental peace and spiritual enlightenment. There were many who worshipped Sai for a long time. Swamiji

did not go in search of Sai Baba. Baba came in search of him and made him an instrument to convey His grace to the humanity. The choice was appropriate and was well proved by Swamiji's service to the devotees during the last four decades. On 7—4—1941 he came to Penukonda on transfer. Swamiji's pujas of Sri Sai Baba on Thursdays, at Penukonda, attracted many. Sri S. Subba Rao, Pleader, Gooty, wrote in "Sai Leela Masik" April, May June 1943, about Swamiji, that "He has acquired marvelous powers by Baba's grace. He foretells events with mathematical accuracy, cures diseases by mere touch and transfers the sick people's diseases to himself. In addition to daily worship, he performs special worship on every Thursday, which is attended by hundreds of persons. As soon as devotees enter the puja room, his look at Baba's picture, tells him the grievances for which they have come to him, together with necessary remedies for the same. When he speaks to them in worship room, he is not conscious of himself as Baba is in him. He does not do anything without Baba's permission. If devotees are not able to go to him, and write letters to him about their ailments and worldly worries he places them in front of Baba's picture during the time of worship and gets correct answers by a mere look at Baba's picture, and promptly sends replies. Baba talks to him through the picture, through dreams and in a variety of ways and helps him always to do humanitarian work without prejudice to his official duties. Within a short period of about 16 months, he has received about not less than 2000 letters each of which has been promptly and correctly answered. Many persons coming or writing from distant places like Madras, Bangalore, Mangalore, Calcutta, Ceylon, Japan and Burma had their desires gratified and miseries removed".

In 1948, Swamiji got a temple constructed for Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi at Penukonda. Then he fell sick and came to Madras for treatment. Since 1949, after his miraculous recovery, Swamiji had conduced Thursday pujas at "Sai Nilayam", Shenoy Nagar. Sri Sai Baba's Puja at Sai Nilayam, Shenoy Nagar, occupied a position of eminence in the country. Thousands of devotees gathered on these days, in pin drop silence seeking relief from spiritual and bodily worries,

is it necessary to invite bees to suck honey from flowers ? That spoke volumes of his great selfless spiritual work and proved that the Swamiji was sustained and supported by the great power of Sri Sai Baba. Sai Ram's merciful glance was the strength behind him. In Puja, Swamiji gave Baba's udhi, (sacred ash got from Shirdi), as prasad, which was gratefully received by the devotees and acknowledged as a panacea for all ills and woes which afflict mankind. In the year 1945, Late Sri B. V. Narasimha Swami observed that " Numerous instances are, found in the pages of "Sai Sudha" evidencing the wonderful accuracy of several of Sri S. B. Kesavaiah's predictions. If they were all invariably true, one would begin to identify him with Sri Sai Baba. Sri S.B. Kesavaiah is frank enough to admit that a few powers (within limits) do not make him a Sai. We must applaud him for his humility, candour and truthfulness."

It was not without basis and reason that the late Sri Narasimha Swamiji declared that " If a hundred out of a thousand people get benefit by listening to me 900 people get benefit by attending Swami Kesavaiahji's Puja. After Puja, he tells of future events in a remarkable way." One is so much overawed with the Swamiji's magnetic personality and purity of life and with his motto of service to sick and suffering with spiritual powers, that one forgets himself and cannot resist the spontaneous urge of offering his obeisance to him. The darshan of a real saint is a golden event in the life of a real sadhaka. Swamiji's touch on one's forehead with Baba's udhi gave a thrill to the devotee and mystically his worries and anxieties vanished. He kindled the sparks of spirituality among all those who came into contact with him. The great always bestow blessings on those who are meek and humble. Swamiji transmitted his staunch faith in Sri Sai Baba, as the Supreme Force on Earth, to all who went to him. Swamiji required no particular place or time to invoke Baba and give Udhi and convey Baba's blessings. He visualised a stagey and that vision was so clear in his mind that he felt he was sitting and meditating by the side of Sri Sai Baba.

Saints are verily the living gods on earth. They are bestowers of liberation. The saints have not failed any one so far. The saints always condescend and fulfill devotee's desires. Service to a saint will not go in vain. Anything given in the

service of a saint will grow infinitely. If you sow a grain, it is returned thousand fold. Yogis can see beyond the vision of ordinary men. Swamiji was a great saint and a Yogi. He was aware of the desires of all, hence there used to be no questioner among his audience. Before they could ask him he used to answer them. The real saints are like lotus leaves. The water of common human desires did not stick on, to tarnish the spirits of Swamiji. Saints relieve our pain, remove our difficulties but will not interfere usually in the course of nature even though they are able to do it. When it was reported that there was no rain at Dharmavaram, Swamiji prayed to Sri Sai Baba. Lo! there was plenty of rain. It was also a common experience of thousands of devotees that there used to be rain throughout the city of Madras but there was no rain in Shenoy Nagar, this was to enable the devotees to participate in the Maha Samadhi day celebrations of Sri Sai Baba and return home safely.

The sage of Shenoy Nagar protected all, even the crooked and the sinful, when they were repentant. Even the punishment inflicted on devotees was only to correct them. It was the experience of the devotees that their difficulties vanished by. simply remembering him. He was no ordinary man. Tukaram says, even particles of dust attached to the feet of saints would work miracles. Swamiji often said that, "Even if I take -128 births more, I cannot become Sri Sai Baba. I am only His devotee. I visited Shirdi 73 times. The joy I had experienced is beyond words. It is difficult to understand Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi. All saints are one. Service to,,; suffering humanity is Baba's Dharma. He taught catholicity-of religion.. Everyone should serve and help others to { his capacity. Jt is only the good we do, that accompanies our .souls. Hatred and jealousy should be forbidden. Honesty and truthfulness are a must. God recedes from those who are dishonest and untruthful. Character and truth are essential. Truth and righteousness alone save us. The ignorant youth is turning away from religious and moral discipline because he! gets no religious education either at home or at school to mould his character. Novv-a-days science and politics are considered to be the 'Be all and end all' of man's life. The responsibility to teach their

children, the devotion to God, reverence to one's Guru, obedience to their elders, and to make them speak truth always is on the mothers.'

In ordinary life, Swamiji was simple and unostentatious. He wore a milky white jubba, a white dhoti and an upper cloth. He spoke so softly, affectionately and lovingly, that devotees felt unburdened the moment they saw him. After years of married life, many wondered how Swamiji who was a Grihastha attained such spiritual powers. Perhaps it was only to establish, that celibacy, severe penance in caves and forests are not necessarily the pre-requisites to attain self realisation, that .Sri Sai Baba chose Swami Kesavaiahji, an Adarsa Grihastha, as fully qualified to receive His benediction and made him an instrument to exercise His spiritual powers.

Like St. Paul, Swamiji was spreading the Gospel of Sri Baba sitting at " Sai Nilayam " Shenoy Nagar, Madras. 'Sai Nilayam had been a spiritual centre shedding its lustre to hundreds of people every Thursday. People were seen crowding to Shenoy Nagar by buses on Thursdays and form themselves into queues to get into the Shrine to pour out their feelings and get relief at the hands of H. H. Swami Kesavaiahji. That streams of men and women should flock in such numbers is a clear demonstration of the^/faith in prayers and its incalculable effect. Prayer rs the golden chain that links God and man. Its powers have been abundantly proved in the lives of all great apostles, saints and sages all over the world, both East and West. There is nothing that cannot be achieved by prayer. It is in this, all embracing field of prayer that Swami Kesavaiahji was rendering yeoman service silently and most unostentatiously. There is no propaganda but there is the silent dedicated service in the spread of His Master's Grace to all who seek His Grace.

Week after week the number of devotees participating in Sai worship at "Sai Nilayam" at Shenoy Nagar began to increase rapidly. The people of Shenoy Nagar, Madras are lucky. Swamiji's heart overflowing with love for the devotees melted at the sight of these numberless devotees, exposed to unfavourable weather, like scorching heat, the biting cold of the winter and occasional drizzling to heavy showers of rain in the night. By the untiring efforts of Swamiji, the

incessant urge among devotees to help and spread the Divine Message of Sri Sai Baba everywhere, took shape and the Sri Sai Baba Bhaktha Samajam came into existence as a Registered Body in the year 1959 with Swamiji as its Founder-President. It had been the dream of Swamiji day and night, to have the Prayer - Mantap there in the open spacious grounds situated in front of the 'Sai Nilayam'. Whatever comes up in the. mind of a saint, God Almighty fulfils it. 14th of March 1975 was a glorious day, which deserved to be recorded in letters of gold. We had the fortune of witnessing the opening of the magnificent edifice by the then Home Minister Sri K. Brahmananda Reddy and on the next day the meditation hall by the then Finance Minister Sri C. Subramaniam. Sri Shirdi Sai Baba Mandir dedicated to Sri Sai Baba is to radiate His grace from Shenoy Nagar, thenceforth for centuries to come. Many devotees circumambulate the Mandir every day for certain number of times for a certain number of days, as instructed by Swamiji and get their desires fulfilled by the grace of Sri Sai Baba.

Apart from conducting Thursday-Poojas at the Mandir, answering devotees in person and through letters, celebrating the annual functions Sri Swamiji had been taking pains, at great personal inconvenience to visit various places outside Madras to propagate Sri Shirdi Sai Baba's message. He founded Samajams at Secunderabad, Bangalore, Vijayawada, Vuyyur, Nalagonda, Kareemnagar and other places. He opened several mandirs of Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi at several places in the last four decades and the latest was at Vidyanagar, Nellore District, (A.P.) in March 1981.

The most remarkable feature of Swamiji's life was he succeeded in reforming the character of some men and women whose morals were low. This was an incomparable benediction conferred on him by Sri Sai Baba. It looked as though the family surname of 'Swami' presaged Sri Swami Kesavaiahjl's spiritual eminence. Atheists have become theists and devotees of Sri Sai Baba. Swamiji, the chosen apostle of Sai Baba, is revered and adored by multitudes of people of all rank and position. To the hundreds and thousands of devotees who go to him, Swamiji gave a soothing touch, a kind word, , guidance, and comfort. Whether it

was a personal problem-or sickness or whatever it was, Swamiji got the message from Sai Baba. Swamiji had a unique personality in the realm of Sai cult.

The spiritual centres he had founded for the worship of Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi in the past four decades speak eloquently of the unlimited grace he was enjoying of Sri Sai Baba. Swamiji's tact and power of understanding and adapting himself to the devotees with whom he was dealing, were marvellous. He never expected a devotee to attain perfection at once. He was not surprised at the sight of human weakness. He was a perennial source of spiritual inspiration to his devotees, especially during these days when systematic attempts were made to deny the existence of God and to decry spiritual leaders by a section of the society.

In the last four decades he wrote several articles to the various magazines on Philosophy, Religion, Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi, Mission of Saints, Bhakthi, Prayer, etc., in simple and lucid style. These form a guide to the spiritual aspirants.

Sri Sri Prakasa, Governor of Madras, participating in Sri Sai Baba Mahasamadhi Day celebrations in the year 1955, warmly applauded the services of Swami Kesavaiahji to the community at large and which he did so by following the example of his great master Sri SafBaba.

IN 1962, participating in Sri Rama Navami celebrations Mr. Justice P. Ramakrishna lyer, I. C. S., Judge, Madras High Court, said that he knew Swamiji for long and that he used to attend his Puja many a time while he had been posted in Andhra. He said that he had always great regard and love for Swamiji and was benefitted much by his Puja and Blessings. He further said that "Swamiji is a remarkable man in our country to whom spirituality came at a very early age who had been inspiring a large number of educated people in the authentic religious way. We know the great spiritual work of our Ramana at Thiruvannamalai and Acharya Swami Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam Sri Sankaracharya at present. The work done by Swami Kesavaiahji in his own humble way can be compared to that of these God men. But for them we will be like blind men groping in the dark."

Dr. H. T. Vira Reddi, F.R.C.S., F.I.C.S., in an interview given to Sri M. S. Kotiswaran, M. A. (Columbia) in the year 1965 said since 1948 I am fairly in close touch with Sri Swami Kesavaiahji. He is the favourite devotee of Sri Sai Baba. He could see the destiny of others as one sees stars through the telescope. He never lets any one down but likes all, even the worst person of the society. For instance, he is afraid of hurting even a diseased dogj that comes near him. When he speaks about religion, one feels inspired by the admirable way he drives home his objective. It is only out of intense love for humanity he is. eager that others should enjoy the same bliss that he happens to enjoy " Sri M. S. Kotiswaran writing in "My Pilgrimage" further said, Kesavaiahji seeks no princely pomp, and when asked why he does not move like whirlwind and catch the mass mind he answers that he has no orders from his Master. His duty was to carry out the task assigned to him by Sri Sai Baba.

In the year 1975, participating in Guru Poornima Celebration, the Governor of Tamil Nadu, Sri K. K. Shah observed that he was very happy to find such a beautiful Mandir, calm, cool, collected, sober and which gave peace of mind and spirtual satisfaction. Any holy place should be calm and inspiring and he was happy that this Mandir was one such place. He would love to come here any day for meditation and peace of mind. He was very happy to find more women than men in the gathering because women were the custodians of the culture of India. Swami Kesavaiahji deserved our respectful thanks, for the great spiritual ministration he had been carrying on in a spirit of dedicated service without any other motive."

In a foreward to a book, in the year 1976, Sri V. V. Giri observed, that " I had the privilege of knowing Sri Kesavaiahji from 1949. Swamiji's devotion and surrender to Sri Sai Baba is profound and complete. When at Penukonda, there was no place for the Bhaktas of Sri Sai Baba to meet in congregation. Swamiji threw his own house open for the purpose to his devotees' meetings from time to time. Swamiji is a leader of this great Sai Movement, with great distinction whose character, integrity and sainlliness were recognised by all." Sri V. V. Giri further

observed that the Swamiji's life of truth, purity and dedication had a profound influence on the life of citizens.

Smt. Jothi Venkatachalam, Governor of Kerala, participating in Sri Rama Navami celebrations in the year 1979 said, " It is a privilege, blessing and a pleasure to preside over the Sri Rama Navami Celebration under the auspices of the Sri Sai Baba Bhaktha Samajam and participate on this great and holy occasion where all the devotees of Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi assemble for prayer under the guidance and leadership of Swami Kesavaiahji. I have been associated with the Samajam as a devotee of Sai Baba for many years and have come here many times for the blessing of Sai Baba and Swami Kesavaiahji. The Samajam was founded by Swamiji with a view to spread the teachings of Sri Sai Baba and give his blessings to devotees. It was his untiring efforts and thai of all Sai devotees which helped him to establish this great temple of spfrituality. Ever since I came into contact with him, he was like a Guru to me and it is the same with all the people who came into contact with Swamiji."

In the. year 1977 Shri M. Uttam Reddy, Chairman .of the Samajam welcoming the devotees on Guru, Poornima day said, "The magnificent Shrine we have today is the fulfilment of Swami Kesavaiahji's love for his devotees and will remain as a monument of his faith in Sadguru Sri Sai Baba." He .also recalled the prediction of Swamiji, when Sri Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy visited the Shrine in 1965, that he would occupy the highest position in the country.

Sri Prabhudas Patwari, the Governor of Tamil Nadu presiding over Guru Poornima Celebrations at Sri Shirdi Sai Baba .Mandir in the year 1979, observed that he felt a different atmosphere—spiritual atmosphere—whenever he stepped in this magnificent edifice of Sri Shirdi Sai Baba. He 'said, '"I pray and wish that His Holiness Swami Kesavaiahji should live for more than hundred years not for his sake but for the sake of humanity."

In the last public meeting of Swamiji, on 16th of July 1981, the officiating Chief Justice of Tamil Nadu High Court, Mr. Justice P. R. Gokulakrishnan, addressing the devotees paid rich tributes to the qualities of head and heart of his Holiness Swami Kesavaiahji and said that "Swamiji's message of peace and

his service to the society were unique. The Swamiji had become a guru to the thousands of followers of Sri Sai Baba."

Throughout his life he was known for his strict discipline. At the same time he had deep compassion for poor and always insisted on helping the down-trodden and chanting of "Sairam" or any name of the God at least for few minutes in a day. Wherever he went he set up Samajams and Mandirs for Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi. He always stressed that people should be honest in their word, deed and thought. He emphasized the need for spirituality for orderly material progress. In his discourses, he always appealed to the womenfolk to bring up their children as model citizens. Swamiji was a Godman with a difference. He never claimed himself to be a Baba. On the other hand he firmly belived that no one, however gr eat he might be, could become Sai Baba. There is not another another Ramadas. There is not another Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, he used to say. He was not a scholar in the worldly sense, but his words were pregnant with philosophical truths and spirituality. He was not a great orator, but his speeches were charged with devotion and sincerity and attracted huge audiences wherever he went. Although he is not seen now in his mortal form, his spirit remains immortal for the services of mankind. It pervades this universe and continues to guide the destinies of many of Sai Devotees, who surrender to him heart and soul. This was his promise and phophecy. He was a saint of the highest order. He was an embodiment of love, service compassion and simplicity. He was a brilliant meteor which shone on the spiritual firmament of India in this century. Such pious souls very rarely appear on this worldy scene to remind us of highest values of life and to turn erring mankind to the right path.

This world is upheld by the, veracity of such good man and such godmen. They .are the salt of this mother-earth and their lives spread fragrance of spirituality. With their life of devotion, service, sacrifice and purity they make this earth wholesome. May his life inspire us to be good and perfect in this very birth!

He is survived by a son and two daughters. It was at about 6-10 p.m.', the sun" had 'set on 9th ; August 198l Sunday,' Sravana[1] Suddha, Dasami. He asked for Udhi. Took it, applied to his forehead arid swallowed, said "Allah Malik" and

closed his eyes, sitting. After 10 minutes he was made to rest on the bed. At about 6-28 p.m. the sage of Shenoy Nagar left his mortal coils.

Glory to Sri Sai Baba and glory to the hallowed memory of his chosen devotee Sri Swami Kesavaiahji.

Om Shanthi ! Om Shanthi ! ! Om Shanthi ! ! !